## A Comparison of Behavioral Competencies Between Home Economics Specialist and Non-Specialist EPP Teachers

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This qualitative study seeks to compare the behavioral competencies of 15 Home Economics (HE) specialist and non-specialist Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP) teachers and to identify factors influencing these competencies. Data, obtained using researcher-developed Behavioral Competencies Questionnaire, were subjected to thematic analysis. Results revealed that the EPP teachers have positive self-image, positive teacher traits, clear social roles, and motivation in teaching EPP. HE specialists felt confident when teaching because they knew that they were teaching accurately. They were passionate and motivated to advocate the value of learning EPP. Non-HE specialists exerted more effort in learning EPP because of their professional commitment. They felt effective when students showed positive outcomes, but some still tended to lack depth when teaching EPP. They lost motivation sometimes because teaching EPP was forced upon them. Field of specialization was a factor influencing EPP teachers' self-image and personality traits. Their perceived social role was molded by the nature of the profession, and their motivation by teaching preparation experiences. Based on the results, HE curricula should continue to focus on developing effective HE teachers, and more HE programs should be promoted. Demotivated EPP teachers should remind themselves of their social roles that motivate them to teach.

*Keywords:* home economics, EPP teachers, social role, self-image, personality traits, motivation

#### Introduction

The implementation of the Kinder to Grade 12 (K-12) Basic Education Program in SY 2011-2012 emphasized the need for lessons on life skills (Nessipbayeva, 2012). These life skills are integrated in the following subjects: Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP) for grades four and five and Technology and Livelihood Education (TLE) for the higher grade levels. These subjects are ideally taught by teachers with specialization in Home Economics (HE) and related fields as they cover the following specific content areas: HE; entrepreneurship; agricultural, industrial, and graphic arts; and information and communications technology. These areas contribute to the enhanced day-to-day living of individuals, families, and communities (Department of Education [DepEd], 2016).

It is important that EPP is taught by field specialists for them to be able to successfully impart the complex, scientific, and artistic components of HE, and at the same time empower the students to apply their learning to grow and develop holistically (Haapala et al., 2014). However, in recent years, the number of HE graduates who are qualified to teach EPP has declined. The Commission on Higher Education (2019) reported a decrease in the number of HE graduates from 1,236 graduates in AY 2016-2017 to 970 in AY 2017-2018. There is also a possibility that not all of these graduates will pursue a teaching career or pass the Licensure Examination for Teachers. During the cited school years, enrollment at the elementary level was about 14.3 million students in 2016 and 14 million in 2017. Meanwhile, enrollment in the secondary level was about 7.3 million in 2016 and 7.5 million in 2017 (CEIC Data, n.d.). These data and possible scenarios imply an impossible ratio of approximately one HE teacher to 22,164 students. As a result, the country is facing the difficulty of balancing the low supply of teachers and the large demand for them in education (Soliven, 2016).

Because of the low number of EPP teachers, specialists in other subject areas like Mathematics, English, and Science tend to be asked to teach EPP. This situation makes them non-HE specialists. As they may not have sufficient competencies to effectively teach EPP, this can impact the quality of HE education. As such, it is important to explore the readiness of these teachers in teaching the subject.

The readiness of non-HE specialists can be measured in terms of their behavioral competencies. This refers to their self-image, personality traits, perceived role or value, and motivation (Spencer & Spencer, 1993). These competencies create pleasant teaching attitudes and environments that provide emotional support for learning (Selvi, 2010), and are thus important to be investigated. According to Osman et al. (2019), these competencies must be taken into consideration before determining the technical competencies (i.e., knowledge and skill) of a teacher. Given these, a comparison of the behavioral competencies between HE and non-HE specialists would be beneficial in providing a reference for describing the latter's readiness to teach EPP.

This kind of comparison between HE specialist and non-HE specialist EPP teachers has not yet been explored in previous studies. Previously conducted research about teaching competencies focused more on the knowledge and skills competencies for effective teaching (Nessipbayeva, 2012; Osman et al., 2019; Selvi, 2010). Since teachers should ideally be teaching subjects within the boundaries of their expertise (Valera, 2015), this study compared the behavioral competencies of EPP teachers who are HE specialists and non-HE specialists. Specifically, it aims to answer the following questions:

- How do the behavioral competencies between HE and non-HE specialist EPP teachers compare?
- 2. What factors influence the behavioral competencies of HE specialists and non-HE specialists?

#### Review of Related Literature

## **Behavioral Competencies**

Behavioral competencies are covert traits that can be inferred from performance (London Leadership Academy [LLA], n.d). They are emotional abilities that aid teachers in improving student learning and motivation to learn. They are crucial because they foster a supportive academic environment (Selvi, 2010). They have four broad dimensions: self-image, traits, social role, and motive (LLA, n.d.).

## Self-image

Self-image is one's view of himself/herself (LLA, n.d.), composed of self-esteem and self-efficacy. Self-esteem is an assessment of oneself, whether good or bad, positive or negative, or desirable or undesirable (Leonard, 2020). Meanwhile, self-efficacy is "the belief that one is capable of exercising personal control over one's behavior, thinking, and emotions" (Tella, 2008, p 22). Self-image is thus considered one of the most important aspects of good teaching. In particular, self-efficacy reflects how educators trust in their capacity to successfully teach learners. Building it will increase teachers' desire to try out new instructional strategies to help students gain the necessary learning competencies (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017). With increased levels of self-efficacy, teachers have the tendency to engage students more and use teaching methods that are more effective in encouraging positive attitudes, conduct, and academic achievement among students (Tschanne & Woolfolk, 2001, as cited in Shahzad & Naureen, 2017).

A local study also explored Filipino English teachers' levels of self-efficacy in developing their competencies in teaching senior high school. Results showed that some teachers had high levels of self-efficacy, and some had low levels. The latter had generally low levels of eagerness when dealing with their problems; they lacked the confidence to cope with and efficiently address them (Agas et al., 2015). With regard to teaching HE, the study by Yu (2011) emphasized the importance of self-efficacy as it aids educators to face and address teaching-related challenges, including

shifting demands from students and altered timetables of content for teaching HE. The surveyed teachers had high self-efficacy levels in terms of providing assistance to their students. Finally, another study revealed that the HE teachers' self-efficacy is crucial in promoting and educating family life and values (Rahimah et al., 2014).

Teachers' self-image, as reflected through their self-esteem and self-efficacy, is just one behavioral competency that could possibly aid them to be successful in teaching. Aside from this, their traits may also play crucial roles in teaching as this competency concerns their strengths and shortcomings.

## Personality Traits

Traits are "habitual driver behavior" (LLA, n.d., p. 4) that are shaped by major experiences in a person's early years of development. It has a variety of manifestations, including cognitive, physical, and psychosocial, which enable people to act in particular ways to feel accepted and rewarded for their efforts (LLA, n.d.). They could be positive or negative; positive traits are considered strengths, while negative traits as weaknesses (Davis, n.d.).

Teachers' personality traits are linked to their effectiveness as educators and to the achievement of their students (Klassen & Tze, 2014). For instance, the teachers' professional demeanor may affect students' motivation and academic achievement (Dost & Hafshejani, 2017; Khan et al., 2016). Khan et al. (2016) found out that students become motivated to study when their teachers have good personality traits because they aspire to adopt their teachers' characteristics. Meanwhile, another study that focused on the teachers' personality and their effects on achievement examination scores of Iranian secondary level students revealed that the more extroverted the personality of the teacher is, the higher the test performance of students. Thus, they recommended personality as an important criterion for selecting teachers (Dost & Hafshejani, 2017).

Determination and dedication of state university teachers in the Philippines were the focus of Fabelico

and Afalla's (2020) study. The two traits were measured in terms of grit, self-efficacy, and burnout. Results showed that teachers have high levels of grit in the aspects of being consistent and persevering in their efforts. They also exhibit high levels of self-efficacy related to delivering lessons, making adjustments to individual learners' needs, inspiring pupils, upholding class rules, collaborating with coworkers and students' parents, and adapting to changes. Lastly, their levels of burnout were low for emotional exhaustion but high for both pessimism and reduced personal accomplishment.

Another local study sought to classify the teacher's characteristics as either warm or competent. Results revealed that when students saw their teachers as warm, similar traits were most likely to be observed in them. They were also more likely to respond to their teachers' warmth trait compared to the latter's competence trait (Rungduin et al., 2018).

Personality traits of HE teachers are crucial because they have the power to shape students' attitudes toward the HE subject, which in turn can affect how they view their teachers as effective. As reported in Udonwa et al.'s (2017) study, positive attitudes of students toward the subject would go a long way in preventing classroom management issues. These would also encourage students to consult with their teacher for explanations about the lesson to boost their understanding of lessons. In HE classes, this is crucial because a deep understanding of the subject matter increases the likelihood that students will effectively apply their learnings in their lives. In addition, when teachers have positive personality traits, it is likely that they will become more open to contemplating their purpose and recognizing their social roles and values as educators.

## Social Role

Social role is the awareness of one's purpose in society that is formed based on what they believe to be expected of them. It has an impact on how they evaluate the significance and suitability of their behaviors in particular circumstances (LLA, n.d.).

Teachers with this social role competency consider how they may impact pupils and help them become responsible citizens. They acknowledge that they serve to mold their learners' minds by teaching, thus they keep themselves updated on their surroundings (Sihem, 2013).

In a study about teachers' understanding and efforts in performing their social roles, Balyer and Ozcan (2020) found that Turkish teachers were aware of their social role in developing the following among their students: different points of view, critical thinking, and awareness of environmental problems. They were aware that they have the responsibility to provide practical guidance to their learners and assist them in adapting to changes. The researchers concluded that teachers are considered leaders of society because they also develop future leaders. By being responsible and caring towards their students, the teachers help the latter to live socially responsible lives.

A local qualitative study that explored young Filipino teachers' reasons for teaching also revealed that their reasons included the desire to bring positive change and address social problems, prepare students for life and transform them, be an inspiration to them, instill values in them, enable their dreams, and share their knowledge and skills (Rogayan, 2018). Lucman (2015), on the other hand, described the perceived professional image of Filipino teachers. Similar to the previous studies presented, while Filipino teachers in this study acknowledge the influence they have in shaping students' minds, they are also aware that some people look down on their profession, thus making them anxious. Nevertheless, they regularly did self-reflection and self-monitoring to cope with these concerns.

The aforementioned studies show the value of teachers' clarified social roles. With this, they become aware of the significance of their profession, and this may motivate them to continue teaching. Their motives in teaching are another behavioral competency that is necessary for them to perform well in their profession.

#### Motivation

Motive or motivation refers to "an energy or drive that moves people to do something by nature" (Han & Yin, 2016, p. 3). "A motive is a recurrent concern for a goal state, and that concern drives our thoughts and behavior" (LLA, n.d., p. 5). It has two aspects: initiating motivation or the desire to begin something and sustaining motivation or the attempt to keep doing it (Williams & Burden, 1997, as cited in Han & Yin, 2016). In relation to teaching, these two aspects of motivation can be viewed in Ushioda's (2011, as cited in Han & Yin, 2016) aspects of teaching motivation, which refer to the desire to teach and the willingness to stay in the profession.

In relation to teaching HE, Malama-Mutti and Tunrayo (2019) mentioned that there was a need for HE teachers to have high levels of motivation because with it, they will be willing to improve their skills and in turn help improve their students' acquisition of HE knowledge and skills. HE teachers consider HE as an important and valuable subject, worthy to be studied as it teaches essential life skills that serve as useful tools for increased quality of life (Jenkins, 2014). Meanwhile, Jenkins (2014) concluded that when educators are convinced that HE can bring development to the pupils' lives, they are more motivated to stay in the profession. The teacher's motivation was also identified as a powerful tool that could bring a positive impact on curricular change since teachers are aware of the value of the subject they teach. They become more effective in improving their curriculum when they are surrounded by supportive collegial environments. In relation to curriculum, the Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan subject in the Philippine basic education level, is presented in the following section.

## Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan (EPP)

Edukasyong Pantahanan at Pangkabuhayan is a subject in the Basic Education Program of the Philippines. Its primary goal is to give students the opportunity to demonstrate the fundamental values, knowledge, and skills in the areas of home economics (HE), entrepreneurship and information,

communication, and technology (ICT), agriculture, and industrial arts that can enhance one's self, family, and community. It is an outcome- and skill-based subject. Both EPP4 and 5 cover the same general topics but the specific contents are different. The lessons on HE for EPP4 cover self-responsibility, attitudes and values in the home, home management, and planning healthful meals, while EPP5 focuses on maintaining clothes, having proper posture, managing one's home, and preparing nutritious foods. Entrepreneurship and ICT topics include the idea of entrepreneurship, safe and responsible ICT usage, ICT use for exchanging, organizing, and analyzing information, for communication and cooperation, and for knowledge product generation. EPP5 also includes an additional lesson on the steps to becoming a successful entrepreneur (DepEd, 2016).

These content areas of EPP4 and 5 show that EPP is valuable to the practical living of students. Thus, teachers should be equipped with the necessary competencies to effectively teach it to the students. However, since not all EPP teachers tend to be specialists in HE, there is a need to investigate the readiness of these teachers in teaching the subject through their behavioral competencies. Even if they are not that well-versed in the field, they can still produce engaging teaching styles and situations that encourage and support learning (Selvi, 2010).

#### Theoretical Framework

The Iceberg Model of Competencies (Figure 1) (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) is the framework used in this study. It features two general competencies of a person: the technical and behavioral competencies, which are represented by an iceberg with upper and lower parts. The upper part shows the technical competencies, which include knowledge, skills, and experiences. Meanwhile, the lower part comprises behavioral competencies, with dimensions of self-concept, traits, and motivations. In another source, self-concept is further viewed as social role/value and self-image (LLA, n.d.). Similar to the lower part of an iceberg that is hardly observed as it is covered in water, behavioral competencies are also unseen and sometimes hardly

perceived (LLA, n.d.; Spencer & Spencer, 1993). Though not easily observed, they influence the technical competencies of a person, which include knowledge, skills, and experiences (LLA, n.d.; Management Study Guide, n.d.).

Figure 1
The Iceberg Model of Competencies (LLA, n.d., p.2)



This study focused on the lower part of the model, the behavioral competencies. To be effective in their craft, EPP teachers need to possess a certain set of abilities and capabilities. Although their knowledge, skills, and related experiences are firstly considered when hiring them for teaching, these competencies are mainly driven by their behavioral competencies. These competencies might be different among HE and non-HE specialists. Specifically, the perceived social role of an EPP teacher may be clearer for HE specialists, as they are more aware of the social contributions of the home economics discipline to families and societies. These teachers might also have a more positive selfimage than their non-specialist counterparts, because of their confidence in teaching their subject of expertise. This could then further push them to be motivated in teaching it.

HE specialists are driven to do well in teaching the subject because they are aware that the skills they teach students are very useful in daily living (Guiner & Mariano, 2013). Nevertheless, both groups of EPP teachers might have pleasing personality traits that could be reflected in their teaching and could affect the

attitudes of students toward the HE subject positively. Positive attitudes of the learners toward the subject would allow them to exert more effort in learning it (Udonwa et al., 2017).

## Methodology

This qualitative research collected data on the EPP teachers' behavioral competencies through the *Behavioral Competencies Questionnaire*. These data were then used to describe such competencies and to derive the factors affecting them.

## Sample and Sampling Procedure

This study initially employed multi-stage cluster sampling to select public school EPP teachers. Public schools in Metro Manila, the most populated area in the country, were treated as clusters, from which nine public schools in Quezon City were further selected since they were the most populated public schools in the metropolitan area (ABS-CBN News, 2015). All teachers in these schools who are currently teaching and have previously taught EPP were invited to participate in the study.

EPP teachers teach grade levels four and five. These grade levels are the starting years when students formally learn home economics in schools. Teachers have the crucial role of properly teaching the foundation of the subject matter to prepare the learners in understanding more complex EPP-related concepts and principles at higher levels. However, during the data collection, the COVID-19 pandemic happened. This pushed the researchers to resort to purposive sampling to increase the sample size. Active online social media groups of public schools were sought to invite respondents, while some respondents were endorsed by informants. Respondents with undergraduate or graduate studies in HE, as well as those who have taught or are currently teaching EPP, were classified as HE specialists. Meanwhile, classified as non-HE specialists were respondents with no formal education in HE but have taught or are currently teaching EPP. A total of 15 respondents agreed to participate.

Table 1 shows the educational background of the respondents. Seven HE specialists (47%) earned HE-related undergraduate degrees, particularly BS Home Economics, BS Industrial Education, and BEEd major in Home Economics. Among these respondents, three (20%) also had HE-related graduate degrees, which are Master of Home Economics and Master of Hotel, Restaurant, and Institutions Management. Meanwhile, eight non-HE specialists

(53%) earned non-HE-related undergraduate degrees, specifically BEEd major in English, BEEd major in Music, Arts, and Physical Education, and BS Accounting. Five among them (33.33%) took graduate degrees that are also not related to HE, which are MAEd Administration and Supervision, MAEd Distance Learning, MAEd Educational Management, and EdD Educational Management.

 Table 1

 Educational Background of Respondents

	Freque	Frequency Percentage		Frequency		Percentage
	HE Specialists	Total		HE Specialists	Total	
HE-related Undergraduate Degree Only	4	7	47%	-	8	53%
HE-related Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees	3			-		
Non-HE-related Undergraduate Degree Only	-			3		
Non-HE-related Undergraduate and Graduate Degrees	-			5		

n = 15

#### Research Instrument

A Behavioral Competencies Questionnaire and a follow-up interview guide were developed to collect data from EPP teachers. These were based on the Iceberg Model of Competencies which focuses on the dimensions of behavioral competencies: self-image, personality traits, social role/value, and motivation (LLA, n.d.). The questionnaire was subjected to pilot testing to improve how questions could be better understood and to avoid ambiguity. It was also

reviewed by two HE experts and practitioners; both have undergraduate degrees in HE and one has a graduate degree in HE. Physical copies were prepared and distributed to the respondents in person while digital copies were created and shared online.

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first part asked for demographic information while the second part included 10 open-ended questions about the behavioral competencies. The questions for each behavioral competency are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2
Behavioral Competencies Questions

Behavioral Competencies	Questions  Do you consider yourself a good teacher? Why or why not?  Do you consider yourself a good EPP teacher? Why or why not?  (Definition of a good teacher - A teacher who practices teaching to ensure better learning for students [DepEd, 2006, as stated in Guiner & Mariano, 2013])			
Self-Image				
Personality Traits	What are your strengths as a teacher? What are your weaknesses?			
Social Role	What is your perception of the teaching profession? What is your teaching philosophy?			
Motivation	Why are you a teacher? Why do you teach? Do you enjoy teaching? Why or why not? Why are you teaching EPP? Do you enjoy teaching EPP? Why or why not?			

The interview guide consisted of the same questions as in the questionnaire but was more focused on the context of being an EPP teacher. Items that asked for the perceived factors that could have influenced the behavioral competencies of the respondents were added.

#### Data Collection

Permission to collect data from the EPP teachers in the selected public schools was first sought from the Schools Division Office QC. The respective school principals were then consulted. After approval, the physical copies of the questionnaires were distributed to the EPP teachers during their free time to ensure that they were not bothered from performing their duties at school. Since the questions would require some reflection, the respondents were given about a week to answer. Another batch of respondents was purposively sampled when the return rate of the questionnaires was low. This was done virtually due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Informants provided contact information of the teachers and communication was made with them.

The responses from the questionnaire were verified through a follow-up online interview.

All respondents were invited to this but only six respondents (HE specialists: 4; non-HE specialists: 2) agreed to participate. As such, survey responses of the teachers who did not participate in the interview were not verified. To compensate for this limitation, all respondents were given detailed orientation about the research during the initial survey and ample time to complete the questionnaire.

#### Data Analysis

Thematic analysis was used to examine and identify themes in the collected data on behavioral competencies. These themes were then summarized using descriptive statistics to present their frequencies, percentages, and ranks. From the qualitative responses, the factors influencing behavioral competencies were extracted.

#### Results and Discussion

## Comparison of Behavioral Competencies Between HE Specialists and Non-HE Specialists

Results presented in Table 3 show that generally, EPP teachers have a positive self-image (HE specialists = 6; non-HE specialists = 7), positive personality traits that are useful in teaching (HE specialists = 5; non-HE specialists = 7), clear social roles (HE specialists = 5; non-HE specialists = 7), and motivation in teaching (HE specialists = 6; non-HE specialists = 7). Tables 4 to 9 summarize the comparison between the behavioral competencies of HE and non-HE specialists.

 Table 3

 Summary of Behavioral Competencies of EPP Teachers

Self-image

Behavioral Competencies		pecialists = 7	Non-HE Specialists $n = 8$	
-	n	%	n	%
Having positive self-image	6	85.71	7	87.50
Having positive personality traits that are useful in teaching	5	71.43	7	87.50
Having clear social roles as teachers	5	71.43	7	87.50
Having motivation in teaching	6	85.71	7	87.50

Self-image is the respondents' perception about whether or not they are good teachers. Results are summarized in Table 4 and show that the majority of HE specialists (n = 5, 71.42%) and non-HE specialists (n = 7, 87.50%) saw themselves as good teachers in general, and that all HE specialists (n = 7, 100%) and most non-HE specialists (n = 7, 87.50%), as good EPP teachers.

Table 4

HE Specialists and Non-HE Specialists' Perceived Self-Image

	HE Specialists $n = 7$		Non-HE Specialists $n = 8$	
Good Teacher in General	n	%	n	%
Yes	5	71.42	7	87.50
No	0	0	1	12.50
Undecided	2	28.57	0	0
Good EPP Teacher				
Yes	7	100	7	87.50
No	0	0	1	12.50
Undecided	0	0	0	0

The sources of their positive self-image are summarized in Table 5. These include seeing learning outcomes from their students (n = 5), and being able to prepare lessons and perform well in class (n = 5).

**Table 5** *HE Specialists and Non-HE Specialists' Sources of Positive Self-Image* 

, c				
Themes	HE Sp	pecialists	Non-HE Specialists	
	n	Rank	n	Rank
Seeing learning outcomes from their students	5	1.5	5	2
Being able to prepare lessons and to perform well in class	5	1.5	7	1
Engaging in activities that could increase their mastery of the profession	2	3	2	3

*Note:* Multiple responses

In terms of lesson preparation, results showed that some HE specialists gained confidence when they were able to properly explain the lesson and make them relatable to the students. They felt that they were able to perform well in class when they successfully selected and used instructional methods that increased students' understanding of the lessons. Examples of their strategies included sharing their own experiences to elaborate on the contents they taught, and using real-life situations such as current issues. Three of them also shared that they have been receiving high scores in an evaluation survey that was regularly given to students every two quarters. Some HE specialists also increased their confidence level when they employed various teaching methods to accommodate all learning styles and interests of students, which in turn improved the latter's academic outcomes.

HE specialist #3 shared how her students expressed their appreciation for her teaching:

"[...] sinasabi nila [students] na, 'hindi kami naging marunong manahi, magluto, 'pag wala ikaw, 'pag wala si ma'am...tinuturuan kami ni ma'am ng gano'ng uri ng gawain." (Students tell me that they wouldn't learn how to sew and cook if I was not there to teach them.)

HE-specialists #4 and #6's positive self-image came from their continuous engagement in professional learning to increase mastery of the profession (n = 2). According to them, they sought to further improve their knowledge and skills in teaching through peer mentoring and attending training. One of them shared that peer mentoring provided opportunities for them to receive first-hand feedback on the aspects of their teaching that needed improvement. These helped them improve and grow, which further increased their self-confidence as teachers. However, despite their positive self-image, some HE specialists still perceived themselves as lacking some teaching skills. One teacher shared that she was uninterested in computers, which affected her skills in the subject area.

For an HE specialist who was unsure of whether he is a good and effective teacher, he still had "a lot to grow and learn as a person and teacher." According to him, he felt that only 50 to 60 percent of his target learning for his students was being achieved and that he was responsible for the remaining learning goal not being attained. This teacher seemed to be setting a very high standard for himself. When asked how his students evaluated him, he shared that he received a fair rating, which meant that he performed well.

For non-HE specialists, the most common source of positive self-image was their successful teaching preparation and performance in class (n = 7). Their preparation included selecting instructional methods that were most appropriate for teaching the content. For some of them, lesson planning helped them to somehow master the knowledge and/or skills they would teach, especially since they were not formally trained in the content they needed to impart and demonstrate. Meanwhile, actual teaching performance for them was their ability to implement their plans and deliver lessons. One non-HE specialist who did not see herself as a good and effective EPP teacher shared that she felt ineffective in teaching the subject because it is highly skills-based, and she lacked the technical competencies to teach it despite having handled the subject for five years already. Meanwhile, some non-HE specialists derived their self-image from seeing positive student outcomes (n = 5). Non-HE specialists #6 and #7 felt that they successfully did their job well when they "produce good pupils" and "improve students' skills," respectively. They were satisfied with seeing even just small improvements in their students. Lastly, similar to the HE specialists, gaining mastery of the profession was also considered by a few non-HE specialists as another source of their positive self-image. For non-HE specialist #3, attending training helped them to continuously improve what they already know and were able to do as teachers, specifically EPP teachers. However, even with having positive self-images, some of them still considered themselves incompetent in teaching the subject because they were not experts in EPP. Non-specialist #8 shared that she worried that she might fail in teaching the subject properly, and thus fail in being a teacher in general.

Based on the results, whether the respondents were HE specialists or not, having the right preparation and strategies in teaching EPP gave them a positive self-image. Preparation gave them confidence and was consequently reflected in their performance. Good performance implied their ability to teach effectively. Being an effective teacher and seeing the students learn also boosted their self-efficacy, which is a component of self-image, because they felt that they did their job well. This is true especially for non-HE specialists. Some of them mentioned how they gained self-efficacy from engaging in activities that helped them gain more mastery of the subject matter. By attending HE-related training, they kept themselves updated with the contents and capabilities that were required to successfully teach the subject out of their expertise. However, results still implied that training or workshops could not replace degree programs that serve as professional preparation for teaching EPP or HE. As presented, a non-HE specialist still found it difficult to master a highly skills-based subject.

Therefore, awareness of one's sources of a positive self-image is necessary. With this awareness, the teachers

would know how to help themselves in building their self-confidence to continuously improve their teaching performance. From all of these, the self-image of EPP teachers was found to be influenced by the following factors: specialization and teaching performance, opportunities for teaching improvement, students' academic performance, and established relationships with them.

## Personality Traits

Table 6 summarizes the personality traits of HE and non-HE specialists. Both groups of teachers were passionate about teaching and motivated for self-improvement (HE specialist: n = 4; non-HE specialist: n = 5), confident in their teaching skills (HE specialist: n = 3; non-HE specialist: n = 3), empathic and flexible to meet students' needs (HE specialist: n = 2; non-HE specialist: n = 2), and patient and approachable (HE specialist: n = 2; non-HE specialist: n = 2). They were also aware of their traits that needed improvement, which were impatience (HE specialist: n = 2; non-HE specialist: n = 1) and inflexibility (HE specialist: n = 1; non-HE specialist: n = 1)

 Table 6

 HE Specialists and Non-HE Specialists' Perceived Personality Traits

Themes	HE Specialists $n = 7$		Non-HE Specialists $n = 8$	
<u>-</u>	n	Rank	n	Rank
Positive Traits				
Passionate in teaching and motivated for self-improvement	4	1	5	1
Confident in teaching skills	3	2	3	2
Empathic and flexible to meet students' needs	2	3.5	2	3.5
Patient and approachable	2	3.5	2	3.5
Traits for Improvement				
Impatient	2	2	1	2
Inflexible	1	3	0	-

Note: Multiple Response

HE specialists reported that their passion and commitment to teaching stemmed from their perceived social role as teachers and the value that they gave to the EPP subject. According to them, they loved teaching because they enjoyed sharing their talents with students. One of them shared that teaching EPP allowed her to learn the other areas of the subject. It was challenging to teach these subject areas, but her drive for self-improvement pushed her to keep on learning and improving. According to HE specialist #5:

"Desidido kasi talaga akong matuto. Lalo na kunwari [...] pagdating sa crochet, [...] di naman sya tinuro nung elementary ako [...]. Tapos noong college [...] hindi ako naka-experience ng crochet. Pero since part s'ya ng curriculum [...] kinailangan kong mag-aral ng sa crochet. So ayun, nanood ako ng mga You Tube tutorial videos [...], sinasabay ko s'ya sa iba ko ding mga preps. [...] inaaral ko kasi talaga s'ya. 'Di pwedeng mababaw lang yung pang-unawa ko doon sa topic na yon." (I am determined to learn. For example, I did not learn crochet in elementary and college. But I have to teach it because it is part of the curriculum. So I studied it by watching YouTube tutorial videos, which simultaneously with other teaching really study preparations. I understanding of that topic should not be superficial.)

Even as they continued to improve their skills in the subject, some HE specialists were still confident in teaching EPP. For them, because they were specialists in the field, they could effectively teach the concepts of the subject. They knew what they were teaching, and their familiarity with the subject allowed them to be creative in designing lesson plans.

Experiences in learning also molded the traits of some HE specialists to be passionate about teaching. As shared by one respondent, when she was studying in the past and during skills training when she was already a teacher, she saw how important it was for one to love learning. She wanted her students to also love learning, and thus she learned to be flexible to meet the needs of her students.

Some of them were also considerate and adaptive to meet the needs of their learners. One shared that she was willing to adjust her teaching style for the students. She looked at them as individuals with their own strengths and weaknesses, thus needing equal opportunities for learning. This trait also caused teachers to be patient and approachable toward their students. According to HE specialist #4, teaching taught him to be level-headed, especially when dealing with students' rowdy behaviors. However, despite these positive traits, some HE specialists found teaching at the elementary level challenging. In some circumstances, they would find themselves impatient and inflexible.

Similar to HE specialists, some non-HE specialists were also invested and committed to teaching because they valued their profession. In terms of teaching EPP, their passion for teaching allowed them to be open to learning. It made them willing to exert extra effort to study the subject. According to non-HE specialists #6 and #8, learning was inevitable in teaching, especially since they had a limited background on the subject matter. At the same time they felt humbled, that even if they were already professionals, they had to study a field out of their expertise. Non-HE specialists #3, #4, #5, and #7 were also positive that they enjoyed teaching EPP, instead of looking at it as additional work on their part. For them, EPP's learning activities like cooking and sewing were practical and a normal part of daily living, hence they felt less burdened when preparing for the subject. This passion and openness for improvement thus helped them become confident in teaching the subject that they were initially unfamiliar with. It also made them understand their students' situations, especially those who have limited resources at home. They supported their learning by occasionally providing materials for the students to be able to accomplish the tasks given. One respondent shared that she even helped her students raise funds one time, which they used to buy project supplies. Meanwhile, a respondent shared that their impatience sometimes led to poor classroom management, especially when students were misbehaving. These were challenging for them because they needed to properly teach a subject out of their expertise, and at the same time attend to the misbehavior of students. Nevertheless, non-HE specialist #2 helped himself by trying his best to be patient, having found this trait as important for teachers to possess. By being patient, teachers could think critically and objectively, and manage the whole class well.

The results presented that the HE specialists and non-HE specialists have common traits, but considerations for having those traits differed in some ways. Some HE specialists were found to be passionate about teaching because they have a complete awareness of the impact of what they were teaching on their students' lives. Their background in the subject also caused some of them to be confident, thus perceiving themselves as effective teachers. Even their being impatient and inflexible at times were attributed to their desire to make their students completely learn the lessons. As shared by one HE specialist, she was aware that because the lessons were practical, poor learning of them might have unpleasant results in the students' lives.

On the other hand, some non-HE specialists were motivated to improve their teaching by being open and humble to continue learning EPP, which required additional effort on their part. This relates to Filipino teachers being persevering and passionate (Fabelico & Afalla, 2020). However, the extra effort caused some of them to be impatient with their students, especially when faced with misbehaviors. Nevertheless, some non-HE specialists used their confidence in teaching, in general, to make themselves feel capable of teaching EPP. However, this confidence should not replace the professional training that EPP teachers need. Teachers have to teach subjects within the boundaries of their expertise (Valera, 2015).

All of these findings revealed that the personality traits of EPP teachers were influenced by their specialization, experiences in learning, and the characteristics of their students.

## Social Role

Social role pertains to the respondents' ideas and insights on their profession and their teaching philosophies. As shown in Table 7, both HE specialists (n = 3) and Non-HE specialists (n = 5) believed that teaching was not just a profession. They acknowledged that they had the responsibility to cause positive change and development in their students.

**Table 7**HE Specialists and Non-HE Specialists' Perceived Social Role/Value

Themes —	HE Specialists		Non-HE Specialists	
i nemes —	n	Rank	n	Rank
Teaching is more than just a profession	3	1	5	1
Teaching is a process of influencing and changing students	2	2	2	2

Note: Multiple Response

HE specialists particularly saw teaching as a fine and reputable profession, which boosted how they saw themselves. Because of this, even if they considered teaching exhausting, they still felt fulfilled. This consequently allowed them to have a wider influence on their students and to stay in the profession. As mentioned by some of them when they shared their

teaching philosophies, teaching made them influential to students (HE specialists: n = 2; non-HE specialists: n = 2). They used this influence to help the latter grow in all life aspects. Teaching for them was a service that aided in improving children's lives. Specifically, HE specialists #3, #4, #5, and #6 shared that they emphasized the practicality of the concepts to their

students by using experiential learning. One HE specialist shared that she did not want to imitate the poor practices of her past EPP teachers because she knew that her students would suffer. On the other hand, another HE specialist expressed that his home economics teachers inspired him and he aspired to teach like them.

Similar to some responses of HE specialists, some non-HE specialists also viewed their profession as noble and influential. Specifically, non-HE specialists #3 and #7 expressed that teaching was not just any profession but a dedication. As emphasized by the latter, they could not teach half-heartedly because touching and influencing the lives of their pupils were on the line. Also according to non-HE specialist #3:

"[The] teaching profession [...] is a passion, an art, and it requires a lot of sacrifices. For others, they might think that the teaching profession is just as simple as "teaching." [...] in the eyes of society, teachers are the paragon of virtues. It is an art because you need to be creative and resourceful [...] You have to instill knowledge by making your own style in teaching through applying the different philosophies, strategies, and methods."

Other non-HE specialists also expressed that teaching was far beyond just telling the students what they knew about the subject matter. For them, teaching involved making sacrifices to ensure that students learned. Those among them who said that teaching was about influencing and changing their students stated that imparting not only knowledge and skills, but also values, helped build students up to be responsible citizens. As mentioned by non-HE specialist #4, teaching was imparting "good manners, right conduct, and responsibility." Non-HE specialist #8 also expressed that by being close to their students physically and emotionally, they could "shape [students'] character and future." Still, two non-HE specialists shared that as EPP teachers specifically, they were teaching the subject only as a subject, without emphasis on the values that the students could learn in doing performance tasks, nor the applicability of these

learning in daily living. One of them also seemed to have an unclear understanding of the subject because she did not consider the EPP skills to be applicable to practical living.

The perceived social role of a non-HE specialist, in addition, was also influenced by the family background of her students. According to her, her belief in playing a crucial role in the growth and development of her students strengthened when she encountered students with families who provided little to no attention nor support to the learners' studies. She believed that teachers indeed stood as second parents to their students because they could fill the gaps that the students' families could not provide.

The results showed the importance of teachers' awareness of their social roles and values as one of their behavioral competencies. However, even though non-HE specialists accepted the task of teaching a subject that was out of their specialization with the belief that they could still mold students into better persons, the quality of their teaching could still be affected negatively because they lacked a complete understanding of the subject matter. This might consequently lead to students' misconceptions and misunderstandings in EPP.

As such, the EPP teachers' perceived social roles were found to be influenced by the nature of the teaching profession, their desire for students' growth and development, previous experiences in studying EPP, and their students' family background.

#### Motivation

Table 8 presents that most HE specialists (n = 6) and non-HE specialists (n = 7) were motivated to teach EPP. Their reasons for motivation are summarized in Table 9: enjoyment and fulfillment brought by teaching (HE specialist: n = 6; non-HE specialist: n = 7) and the students' happiness and future (HE specialist: n = 4; non-HE specialist: n = 4).

Table 8

HE Specialists and Non-HE Specialists' Motivation in Teaching EPP

	HE Specialists $(n = 7)$		Non-HE Specialists $(n = 8)$	
	n	%	n	%
Motivated to Teach EPP	6	85.71	7	87.50

Table 9

HE Specialists and Non-HE Specialists' Sources of Motivation in Teaching EPP

	HE Specialists		Non-HE Specialists	
Categories -	n	Rank	n	Rank
Enjoyment and fulfillment brought by teaching	6	1	7	1
Student's future and interaction with them	4	2	4	2

Note: Multiple Response

For most HE specialists, feeling fulfilled when teaching EPP was caused by their interest in teaching in general and by the value they gave to the EPP subject. Teaching EPP made them happy and motivated. They even expressed their drive to teach it by advocating its importance. HE specialist #6 reported that her motivation further increased when she felt satisfied upon seeing her students value the subject and the lessons learned. Such observations assured her that when students appreciated the lessons, they would come to understand them better. According to her:

"Very fulfilling 'yung job. Dahil merong mga student na bumabalik at bumabalik sa'yo, gano'n. Laging meron silang shine-share na 'uy teacher, sa bahay nakagawa ako ng ganito, ganyan [things similar to what they did in class].' So parang outside ng class, parang nata-touch mo 'yung kanilang [lives]...parang di ka lang teacher sa kanila." (Teaching is very fulfilling because there were students who would come to me and share that they have

done things at home [which they learned from school]. So it's like touching their [lives], and I feel like I'm more than a teacher to them.)

HE specialists were also motivated to teach EPP because of their relationships with their students and their desire to give them a bright future. Establishing good relationships with the learners caused the teachers to be empathic, thus the happiness of their students boosted their drive to continue teaching. HE specialist #6 shared that she loved connecting with pupils. Going to class each day was driven by her excitement to create new interactions with them and impart practical skills that she believed students could use to have a good life.

For non-HE specialists, their enjoyment and fulfillment brought by teaching also gave them the drive to teach EPP, given that the contents of the subject were very practical. As shared by non-HE specialist #1:

"Compare po sa ibang subject, EPP po ay mas madaling i-explain, mas madaling i-apply kasi

pang araw-araw na [...] ginagawa ng tao, ng mga bata 'yon. Tingin ko rin po na mas madadalian akong i-explain sa kanila kasi nararanasan na nila 'yon." (Compared to other subjects, EPP is easier to explain and apply because it involves skills that are practical and are regularly encountered by the students. Because students experience what they learn in the class, it becomes easier for me to explain the subject.)

Non-HE specialists were motivated to teach EPP because the practicality of the subject makes it relatable to students, thus they could easily touch and help improve the lives of the younger ones. This gave them feelings of fulfillment. Though not experts in the field, some found teaching EPP as their destiny or calling, and this motivated them to do their best. They also realized that they already had some home economics skills and were excited to impart these to the learners. Specifically, non-HE specialist #3 shared that she was already familiar with HE-related skills; she was driven to teach them because of this familiarity. Non-HE specialist #5 expressed, "I love the EPP subject and I have the skills in it." However, there is still caution that the quality of the EPP skills that they might be teaching students was inaccurate and/or lacking depth. Familiarity with some EPP skills does not necessarily equate to expertise. Thus, there should at least be an EPP expert mentoring them to ensure that they were teaching the subject correctly.

Non-HE specialists were also motivated by their significant influence on their students' future and by having meaningful interaction with them. For non-HE specialist #8, "teaching teaches all the other professions." Knowing that teaching creates such an impact on one's future motivated this teacher to do and teach well. The other non-HE specialists also expressed that they were motivated to teach because they saw teaching as an opportunity to connect with pupils. It provided them with a chance to support their personal growth and development. They realized that their relationships with learners were advantageous for both of them, since they were given opportunities to get to know more about their students and value the

rapport established with them. This result implies that relationships developed between teachers and students inspired the former to teach every day and kept the relationship going.

Despite the EPP teachers' motivation to teach the subject, teaching preparations showed to be demotivating for a few respondents. HE specialist #4 shared that he sometimes lost the drive to do well because of loads of paperwork. Similarly, non-HE specialist #7 shared that this load included lesson planning and creating teaching materials and assessment tools. She found it tiresome sometimes, given that teachers in public schools dealt with a lot of students. Some non-HE specialists felt that teaching EPP was forced upon them. They still agreed to teach the subject due to financial circumstances and to avoid insubordination, but they were demotivated to teach the subject because they were not well versed in it.

Still, teachers found it motivating when students appreciated what they have learned, and when parents supported the needs of their students in learning the subject. This is especially true since, as shared by a non-HE specialist, their school did not have complete materials to provide for the students. On the other hand, an HE specialist mentioned that her motivation for teaching EPP was due to having complete facilities at school. She found it convenient to teach the subject properly when the resources she needed were available. The availability of school resources was also a reflection of the school administration's support. Aside from these, another HE specialist found her co-teachers' support for her teaching to be a motivating factor. Colleagues' support enabled her to be aware of her shortcomings as a teacher, which she constructively accepted to improve her practice.

From all these, it was found that the motivation of EPP teachers was influenced by various factors: teaching preparation experiences, the EPP subject, students and their parents, school facilities, and school administration and colleagues.

#### Conclusion and Recommendations

The main objective of the current study was to compare the behavioral competencies of 15 HE specialist and non-specialist EPP teachers and to identify factors influencing these competencies. Based on the results, there were both HE specialists and non-HE specialists who had a positive self-image. The HE specialists felt confident knowing that they were teaching accurate concepts to their students, while non-HE specialists sourced this confidence from attending training and planning well for their classes. However, a non-HE specialist found herself ineffective in teaching EPP because the subject was highly skills-based. With this, the self-image of the respondents was influenced by their specialization and teaching performance, opportunities for teaching improvement, students' academic performance, and established relationships with students.

Both HE specialists and non-HE specialists also had positive personality traits and traits for improvement. Some HE-specialists were open to keep on improving their craft, given their knowledge about the significance of learning the subject. Non-HE specialists were open to exerting extra effort to learn the subject and teach it. However, they could be impatient at times with misbehavior among their students because they were exerting much effort not only in managing the class but also in teaching a subject that they were not experts in. Given these, the respondents' traits were molded by their specialization, experiences in learning, and the characteristics of their students.

The perceived social role of both HE and non-HE specialists was to create a transformative change in their students while viewing teaching as more than just a job. Some HE-specialists were aware of the importance of experiential learning because of the nature of the subject. Unfortunately, even though some non-HE specialists were aware of their responsibility to teach values to students, some found themselves teaching EPP as just a subject, failing to emphasize how learning can be effectively applied in daily living. Overall, the respondents' perceived roles were influenced by the nature of the teaching profession, their desire for students' growth and development, previous

experiences in studying EPP, and their students' family background.

Finally, both HE specialists and non-HE specialists were motivated to teach EPP because they found it fulfilling and saw how it could positively impact their students' future. However, some of them would get demotivated at times because of their heavy workload. Non-HE specialists could lose drive when reminded that they were teaching a subject that they were not fully prepared to teach. HE specialists, on the other hand, were driven to advocate the importance of learning the subject because they have a complete understanding of it. Generally, the EPP teachers' motivation was influenced by their teaching preparation experiences, the EPP subject, students and their parents, school facilities, and school administration and colleagues.

Although the result was limited to the study participants, HE specialists in the study were found to be passionate about teaching EPP due to their awareness of the importance of the subject to improving one's daily living. It is thus important that home economics curricula should continue to develop HE teachers with an apt understanding of the importance of the subject. At the same time, although non-HE specialists shared that they were willing to teach EPP, learning EPP will still be more effective if HE specialists will teach it. Thus, it is recommended that tertiary and professional organizations of HE advocate more about HE and its programs, so more students will be enticed to take it in college. This would allow the non-HE specialists to be more effective by focusing on their fields of specialization, and would ensure that EPP is taught not at a superficial level only.

To lessen or remove the demotivating factors to teaching EPP, both HE and non-HE specialists are recommended to constantly remind themselves of their perceived social roles that drove them to pursue teaching. Since some non-HE specialists also found themselves ineffective in teaching EPP because the subject was highly skills-based, professional training in HE is highly necessary to ensure that EPP teachers are equipped with the right knowledge and skills to teach the subject.

HE specialists found supportive school administration and colleagues, and complete teaching facilities to be motivators in teaching EPP. With this, school administrators are recommended to provide EPP teachers with competent mentors and complete EPP facilities, like laboratory tools and equipment. This will ensure that the teachers are not only driven to teach, but also effective in delivering their lessons.

Since behavioral competencies are only one of the two major competencies of a teacher, it is recommended for further research to look into and compare technical competencies, (i.e., knowledge, skills, and experiences) between HE and non-HE specialists. Since this study sampled only a few teachers, considering a larger sample size is also suggested as this could provide richer information.

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