

# Phenomenological Research on “Ethical Anxiety” When Teaching Family and Family life in the Classroom

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## Abstract

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The purpose of this phenomenological research was to understand the lived experience of “ethical anxiety” that Home Economics teachers may have experienced when teaching family and family life area in the classes. “Ethical anxiety” here means that concerns, worries, or lack of self-confidence leading to concerns as to whether the teacher is violating students’ privacy, or whether topics such as marriage, divorce, or child abuse may hurt students’ feelings.

A descriptive phenomenological questionnaire was the method chosen for data collection in this study. The participants were 24 Home Economics secondary school teachers in Kagawa prefecture, Japan. The investigation was conducted from November to December, 2010. The question statement was “Please give details about any ethical anxiety you have felt when teaching family and family life classes. If possible, give concrete examples with as much detail as you can. Please describe what you saw, heard, and how you felt.”

The teachers’ lived experiences fell into four essential themes: (a) teaching while feeling unsure whether any student is being offended, (b) teaching contents superficially with no emotional input, (c) teaching while taking students family backgrounds into consideration, and (d) teaching to make students think their future family lives.

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*Key words;* ethical anxiety, family education, home economics teachers, phenomenology, students’ privacy