

A SURVEY OF THE OPINIONS OF
DISADVANTAGED ADULT HOME
ECONOMICS STUDENTS
ON GRADING

By

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Description of the Problem

The issue of grading, particularly in adult education programs, has prompted much concern in recent years. Many adult educators have come out very strongly against the practice of issuing grades to adult students. Malcolm S. Knowles (1970, p. 43) states,

Probably the crowning instance of incongruity between traditional education practice and the adult's self concept of self direction is the act of a teacher giving a grade to a student. Nothing makes an adult feel more childlike than being judged by another adult: it is the ultimate sign of disrespect and dependency, as the one who is being judged experiences it.

Knowles is explicit in his statement about grading. However, he does not cite any specific study or research to support his stand. William F. Brazziel (1968) states that adults, particularly disadvantaged adults, react negatively to criticism and to such things as grades and report cards. Both authors imply that grading adults has only negative aspects.

In the Oklahoma State Plan for Vocational and Technical Education for fiscal year 1976 (1975) the number two priority is providing pre-service and in-service adult education in effective learning and instruction to Vocational and Technical teachers. In order to provide effective learning situations teachers must understand their students.

In Adult Basic Education A Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers

(1968, p. 113) it is stated that

Underlying the educational process, at all age levels, is the need for teachers to know their students... their capacities, backgrounds, motivations, and personal characteristics. Without such knowledge, even the most competent teacher can not expect to do a fully efficient job of teaching.

In order to provide information to vocational home economics teachers to help them maximize an adult's experience within an adult education situation it is important to ascertain how disadvantaged adult students view the use of grades and grading.

Statement of the Problem

Because adult students usually attend classes on a volunteer basis it is important for adult educators to be sensitive and knowledgeable of the adult student's needs and desires to maximize the student's educational experience. Disadvantaged adults frequently have had unpleasant experiences in school during previous years which produced a sense of failure. It is therefore necessary to determine the adult student's opinion toward the use of grades and grading to help teachers develop the most desirable classroom procedures.

Significance of the Problem

The purpose of this study is to provide professionals in the field of adult education with information about the positive and negative opinions of adult students toward the use of grades and grading. In studying these opinions it is hoped that this information can be used by educators to help develop positive learning experiences for

adult students.

"Accentuate the positive' is a slogan every teacher of the under-educated would do well to repeat to himself every day" (Adult Basic Education A Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers, 1968, p. 11, 5).

In studying the opinions of adult students it is hoped that information pertaining to the development of a positive learning atmosphere can be partially determined. By assessing the present opinions about previous experiences one may be able to get information concerning what steps should be taken to increase the benefits of participation in an adult education program.

The feelings and opinions a person holds about an idea or procedure will affect the way he responds to it. In surveying the opinions toward grades and grading of some of those students who will be receiving them, it may be possible to evaluate the general acceptance of issuing grades to adult students.

Objectives of the Study

Five objectives have been developed to guide this study. They are to determine

1. the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading;
2. the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of a cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation;
3. the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning satisfaction of participation in an educational program;

4. if the issuing of grades effected the opinions of disadvantaged adult students concerning satisfaction of participation in an educational program;
5. if the issuing of grades effected the opinions of disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading.

Procedure

The following procedure was used to complete this study.

1. A review of literature concerning some aspects of using grades, evaluation methods for adult students, and the characteristics of disadvantaged students and their implication for teachers was completed.
2. Two data collection instruments were developed to assess the opinions of disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading within an adult education program. The first instrument contained questions concerning the reasons for participation in an adult education program. The second instrument contained questions concerning satisfaction with the adult education program.
3. Four vocational home economics teachers who had participated in a course on teaching the disadvantaged adult offered by Oklahoma State University in June 1975, were requested to participate in the study.
4. During the fall of 1975, the four vocational home economics teachers selected for participation in this study offered adult education program specifically designed to meet the

needs of disadvantaged adults. Both instruments were completed by those adult students who participated in the programs. There were 38 first instruments and 39 second instruments completed.

5. Responses were analyzed to determine the disadvantaged adult students opinions as related to the objectives of the study.

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study were:

1. The study was limited to the adult students who participated in the adult programs offered by four Oklahoma vocational home economics teachers.
2. The study was limited by the survey method used.
3. The study was limited by the low reading ability of the respondents.
4. The study was limited by the non-random sample of respondents.

Definitions of Terms

The following definitions were selected to help clarify terms used in this study.

Disadvantaged persons are those persons who have academic, socio-economic, cultural or other handicaps that prevent them from succeeding in vocational education or consumer and homemaking programs (State Department of Vocational and Technical Education, 1975).

Evaluation is a process which determines the extent to which objectives have been achieved (Cross, 1973).

Grade represents the encoding of achievement into some ordinal measurement scale (Hunt, 1972).

Opinion is a conclusion or judgement held with confidence.

Teacher/student method of evaluation involves a conference or discussion between the teacher and the student in which both evaluate the student's performance in relation to previously established criteria.

Summary

Improved effectiveness in adult education is one of the top priorities of the Oklahoma Department of Vocational and Technical Education for the fiscal year 1976 (1975). Many procedures need to be evaluated in order to determine their effect when used with adult students. Evaluation is necessary to determine how effective any program is as related to achieving stated objectives. The issuing of grades as a portion of evaluation has been a common practice in most school systems. However, the desirability of issuing grades to adults is looked upon with a great deal of doubt by many adult educators. A survey of a sample of disadvantaged adult students was made with five objectives in mind pertaining to their opinions concerning the use of grades and program satisfaction. The study was limited by the use of the survey method, and by the low reading ability of the respondents. It was also limited to the adult students participating in the classes offered by four Oklahoma vocational home economics teachers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

To better understand the issues of grading, including the advantages and disadvantages of using grades with adult students, a review of literature was conducted. Concepts reviewed were the functions of grading, including that of providing feedback to students concerning their progress, and evaluation in adult education in an effort to determine the purposes, limitations, and methods appropriate for evaluating adults. The characteristics of disadvantaged adults and their implications for teaching and evaluating adult students were also reviewed.

Issues of Grades and Grading of Adult Students

The issue of grading, particularly in adult education programs, has prompted much concern in recent years. Many adult educators have come out very strongly against the practice of issuing grades to adult students. Although little research has been done as to the effects of grading upon adult students, numerous studies have been conducted to determine the effects of grading on different student populations.

A variety of rationales have been used both to support and to

condemn the traditional grading system. One of the most frequently cited reasons for using grades is the motivation factor. Marks make students work, or so it would appear. However, it is difficult to determine if students work specifically for grades or for something behind the grade which is the actual motivator. Grades in and of themselves are neither inherently rewarding nor punishing. However, grades no longer represent a specific level of learning but have taken on the function of a culturally sanctioned reward in the educational system. Hiner (1973, p. 357) has even called grades the "cultural currency of the school economy."

Ideally, students should be motivated to learn intrinsically and should not be dependent upon extrinsic rewards for motivation. In a study recently conducted by O'Brien (1974) which assessed the attitudes of adult students toward grades and grading and the student's level of self-actualization, the following results were obtained. Approximately 80 per cent of a sample taken from junior college classes near Boston, including those who were low to moderately self-actualizing, ranged from slightly positive to highly positive towards grades. The only group that rejected the use of grades outright were the approximately 20 per cent who were high self-actualizers.

O'Brien (1974) concluded that for those students who are not highly self-actualizing it would appear that grades can still be effectively applied as an external incentive to learning. She also notes that students should not be rewarded for inventing new ways of beating the system, but for true learning. The task that remains is for educators to reestablish the link between actual learning and the reward of a grade. Until educators develop a better technique to

motivate all students to the self-directed type of learning characterised by the high self-actualizer, O'Brien feels the continuation of grades seems to be a reasonable course.

Alexander (1964) takes a different view of the grading system. He feels that there is evidence to indicate that grades can be a barrier to learning for some people and are seen more as punishment for poor achievement than as a reward for successful accomplishment.

Smith (1952) conducted research to determine if failure was influenced by the student's self-perception. In other words, was learning impaired if the student thought his performance was a failure whether or not the performance was of low quality. This study concluded that the feeling of failure, not just actual failure, led to poor achievement. Because the individual perceived himself as a failure he functioned as a failure.

Several studies (Thorne, 1954; Ulmer, 1970) have been done that show that failure leads to a lower level of self acceptance and often to a defensive action. Thorne, (1954) in comparing a low self-acceptance group to a high self-acceptance group after inducing a failure situation, concluded that the low self-acceptance group raised their self-evaluation while the high group lowered their evaluation ratings. It appeared that those with a low level of self-acceptance became so preoccupied with the loss of self-esteem that they could not make a realistic evaluation of their performance.

Ulmer (1970) has cited the adult student as differing from the child-student, in that the adult has a great many anxieties and feelings of inferiority about his ability to succeed in the classroom.

Grades as Feedback

Negative responses frequently stem from failure situations which are often generated by the issuing of an unacceptable or low mark. Since traditional grades as a means of evaluation have been considered inadequate, Hunt (1972) sees the function of grades primarily, if not exclusively, as a means of feedback for the student concerning his progress in a course. Hunt also feels that grades can be used as an educational yardstick to measure progress and achievement in a particular academic area. Thus grades can become a useful feedback device not only to the student but also to advisors and counselors.

In a study conducted by Goldstein and Tilker (1971) assessing student attitudes toward a three point honors-pass-fail system and the traditional five point ABCDF system, the following results were obtained. A 64 item questionnaire was developed to measure attitudes toward grading. The instrument was divided into eight areas of concern with respect to the merits of the five point system and the three point system. Each area contained eight items both favorable to and negative to both systems. The students preferred the traditional five point system as a means of feedback as to how they are progressing in a course.

Another study that appears to make the use of traditional grades an acceptable choice for adult students was conducted by Dugan (1974) to determine the effects of two grading systems upon community college students. The two systems compared were the traditional five point system and a nonpunitive three point ABC system. The results showed that given a choice, students will select the grading system they are

familiar with. He also found that academic performance of the students was not increased by the use of a nonpunitive grading system and that to some extent the traditional grading system has a more favorable effect on academic performance. Since most adults would have had little experience with alternative evaluation systems, the traditional system appeared to be a sound choice.

McMahon (1964) conducted a survey of 1,896 adult students, two-thirds of these wanted both grades and examinations; 189 wanted only grades; 88 wanted examinations but no course grade; only 363 students wanted neither grades nor examinations. The reasons cited by the students for desiring grades were varied. Many expressed the opinion that receiving a final grade was an incentive without which the student would not work as hard or accomplish as much. Others viewed the grade positively as a helpful evaluation of progress. Several students wanted to find out whether the instructor's rating agreed with the student's evaluation of their own work. Personal satisfaction and guidance for future study were also listed as reasons for desiring a grade.

Evaluation in Adult Education

Evaluation by definition is a process of making an assessment of a student's growth or an assessment of the extent to which objectives have been achieved (Cross, 1973). There are two important aspects to this definition. First, evaluation should be a systematic process omitting casual uncontrolled observations of students. Second, evaluation always assumes objectives have been identified. According to Gronlund (1971) if educational objectives have not been previously established it is impossible to judge the extent to which progress

has been made.

Evaluation serves a variety of purposes according to Brown (1941, p. 127). Some of the purposes are to:

1. improve instruction so that learning may be more effective;
2. enable schools to measure their educational efficiency and to discover what changes need to be made in curriculum content and methods of teaching;
3. furnish students with information regarding their achievement in the light of their abilities and aptitudes;
4. provide a basis for guidance; personal, educational and vocational;
5. furnish information to prospective employers regarding candidates for jobs.

Hall and Paolucci (1970) are in agreement with Brown as to the functions of evaluation. However, in addition they feel that evaluation helps the student to understand his strengths and weaknesses. Gronlund (1971, p. 9) also views evaluation as an integral part of the teaching-learning process. He states that "while the interdependent nature of the teaching and learning is beyond dispute, the interdependent nature of teaching, learning and evaluation is less often recognized." Cross (1973) identifies four specific results of evaluation: identifying objectives; determining learning experiences; setting standards; and developing decision making skills.

Evaluation involves measurement or quantitative evidence, but is broader than measurement. Evaluation implies consideration has been given to value standards and that an interpretation of the evidence has been made in the light of the particular situation (Brown, 1941). Measurement is only one aspect of evaluation and should be objective and include such data as test scores; it should not include value judgements. Measurement produces evidence as a basis for evaluation and becomes a part of the process (Cross, 1973).

Measurement is one aspect of evaluation but is not the only method of evaluation. Non-test devices of evaluation usually involve two aspects of student behavior which are the performance itself and the quality of the finished product (Hall and Paolucci, 1970). Some non-test devices produce measurement data and others do not (Cross, 1973). Observational devices can be used to evaluate attitudes, appreciations, social interactions and value decisions (Cross, 1973).

In the review of literature several different statements of the purposes of evaluation were found to differ only slightly. There is agreement that evaluation should give an indication of growth or change within the student and should be a continuous process (Cross, 1973; Hall and Paolucci, 1970; Brown, 1941). The two types of evaluation usually considered are program evaluation and individual evaluation. Adult educators are in general agreement as to the need for both types of evaluation within the adult education framework. However, adult educators often feel that not all methods of evaluation are appropriate for the adult education program, particularly if the adults participating are primarily disadvantaged adults (Knowles, 1970; Kidd, 1959).

Fleck (1970, p. 13) states that the evaluation method should be geared to the students, the teacher and the objectives of the course. She also feels that

If the method of evaluation employed deters rather than encourages student growth, frightens rather than gives security to students, or incurs dissatisfaction and aggression among individuals, then the benefits of evaluation are negated.

The appropriateness of evaluation methods used is of particular importance with disadvantaged students due to their characteristics. Knowles (1970) states that most adults are threatened by the use

of the terms test, quiz, and examination, and that these words bring up unpleasant memories of past failures or experiences. Therefore other types of evaluation are more appropriate for use with disadvantaged adults.

Other evaluation techniques suggested by Chadderdon (1970) include the use of games. Evaluative games can vary from the very simple cross-word puzzles and bingo games to complex simulations of real life situations requiring high level cognitive abilities. Observations of behavior is another method of evaluation. However, Chadderdon warns the one observation is not sufficient to determine typical behavior and that several are necessary for accurate evaluations. The teacher needs to use anecdotal records or some type of check sheet so that observations are recorded at the time they are made. Completing check sheets by recalling an observation is often unfair to the student being rated.

Projection techniques are also suggested by Chadderdon. Some examples of these techniques include role playing, completing unfinished sentences or stories or writing a story suggested by a picture or cartoon. Assignments may be used as an evaluation, but it is recommended that the basis of evaluation be decided upon and made clear to the students before the assignment is given. By establishing criteria before giving the assignment students have a framework on which to work (Chadderdon, 1970).

Fleck felt that the process of evaluation is not the sole responsibility of the teacher, but should be a cooperative venture with students and teachers participating. Cooperative evaluation is often conducted by both the teacher and the student completing the same scoring or observational device. Students and teacher then can discuss

differences in scoring. However, with this method the student who feels rejected, disliked or unsuccessful will probably be defensive and unwilling to talk freely about achievement or failures (Cross, 1973).

It is Kidd's (1959) contention that the "agent" of evaluation, or the one who performs the evaluation is very important. One of the primary objectives of adult education programs for the disadvantaged is to prepare students to function as independent beings or to be increasingly autonomous (Knowles, 1970). Kidd (1959), with this objective in mind, felt it is important that the student take over the direction of his own learning, one of the most important aspects of which is evaluation. Students should be encouraged to take a large share of the responsibility for evaluation, if not complete control of, evaluation. This is possible on both an individual and group basis (Kidd, 1959).

One alternative offered by Kidd is to allow class members themselves to prepare the test forms. The resulting test is often more rigorous than that which the instructor would have prepared. If a grade is to be given students can help in deciding which scores will contribute to the grade. Students should then keep tally of their own scores (Fleck, 1953).

According to Knowles (1970, p. 43) the process of self-evaluation is one "in which the teacher devotes his energy to helping the adults get evidence for themselves about the progress they are making toward their educational goals." An example of self-evaluation given by Knowles is that of a student examining a critical incident at the beginning of a learning experience and a similar critical incident at the end of a learning experience. The student can then compare his

performance on both incidents and can measure the change produced by the learning experience.

Gronlund (1971, p. 432) suggests that students identify desired qualities or particular behaviors that should be evaluated and thus construct their own rating scales or check sheets. By involving the students in the development of evaluation devices the students first of all

think more carefully about the qualities to strive for in their performance or product. Second, it has a motivating effect, since pupils tend to put forth most effort when working toward goals they have helped to define.

Program evaluation within an adult education system is often partially if not entirely based on persistence of enrollment or re-enrollment (Schuler, 1957). Continued enrollment is also used as a measure of student satisfaction. When considering the dropout rate as a measure of student satisfaction or program effectiveness there are limitations to be considered. Dropout rate is often used because it provides data which can be analyzed statistically while most other measures are more difficult to subject to statistical tests. One consideration which effected the dropout with adult students was that they have a great many responsibilities outside the classroom. Most have both a family and a full time job which may cause them to drop-out (Ulmer, 1970; Knowles, 1970). Often the factors preventing the adult from attending regularly may have little or nothing to do with the course itself (Schuler, 1957).

Another limitation to be considered is the student's goals. The point at which the student drops out may not be at the completion of the course, but may be at the point of realizing a personal goal

(Schuler, 1957). Boshier (1973) concluded that there are course related and noncourse related reasons for dropout. His research indicated that dropouts tend to dwell on one incident which was the last of a long series of dissatisfactions. He contends that it is easier for a student's self-concept to accept a noncourse related reason for dropping out than a course related reason such as too difficult material.

David Jenkins (1960) cites three relationships in the classroom through which a student can gain satisfaction. He can gain satisfaction through

1. his relationship with the instructor;
2. his relationship with the subject matter of the course;
3. his relationship with the other members of the class.

Jenkins (1960, p. 53) cautions us to view satisfaction as an emotional matter, not an intellectual one.

We feel satisfied; We gain a feeling of accomplishment or success, of release. We may gain these through intellectual activity...but the clarification of the idea or the solving of a problem results in a feeling of achievement and success.

One basic satisfaction a student can gain in a learning situation is a reaffirmation of self worth (Jenkins, 1960). A different kind of satisfaction is offered to the student with his relationship to the subject matter. This satisfaction is related to the feeling of discovery. It may be discovery of new information, new vistas, a resolution to an old problem or something about the student himself (Jenkins, 1960).

Schueler (1957, p. 51) contends that

questionnaires seeking information about the student's satisfactions and dissatisfactions, their reasons for continuing or not continuing can be most useful in assessing course and program effectiveness.

Characteristics of Disadvantaged Adults

All adult students differ from young students in many ways. Verner and Davison (1971) state that all adults experience some kind of physical disability that can cause some learning difficulty. These can be the result of inherited characteristics, injury or disease, inadequate nutrition or from the natural process of aging. Loss of acuity of the eye and of the ear are two of the first physiological changes that take place during aging. The changes occur gradually, but in any group of adults the loss of function is present to one degree or another.

The physiological changes that are associated with aging are influenced by the lifestyle of the individual. Anderson and Niemi have shown that aging occurs earlier in disadvantaged adults. These individuals often lack an adequate diet and as a result are usually more susceptible to disease, have reduced recuperative powers, and frequently have less energy to meet the demands of daily life. The rapid pace of physical decline among the disadvantaged has a psychological effect as well (Verner and Davison, 1971). Age alone is not a barrier to learning, but the changes that occur within the individual have implications for teachers. These implications will be discussed in a later section.

Ulmer (1970) cites both advantages and disadvantages of being an adult student. One advantage is that although the adult may lack formal education he has been educated by living and has been accumulating knowledge for many years. In addition the adult student has an advantage in seeing an immediate need for learning that children usually lack. The adult student has developed an ability to pace

himself and use his resources efficiently and has greater self-control and endurance.

The biggest disadvantage of being an adult student according to Ulmer (1970) are those problems the student creates for himself, such as anxieties and feelings about his inability to succeed in a classroom. The adult who has been away from the classroom for a great many years, especially one who dropped out or was expelled, has many doubts about his ability to succeed. Ulmer does feel that there are adjustments that the adult student must make that are not required of children. These include sitting in a classroom trying to learn from the printed page, concentrating, listening and writing. Most adult students have not used these types of skills since they were last enrolled in school.

Most all adult students, both advantaged and disadvantaged, share some common characteristics. Adult students are more likely to be rigid in their thinking and less likely to adopt new ways. Quite often he requires more time to perform learning tasks, yet he has increased patience. Although his comprehension of difficult reading materials is only slightly changed from childhood he has greater difficulty recalling isolated facts. He has a great many responsibilities competing for his time; therefore, his decision to return to school was a momentous one (Adult Basic Education A Guide for Teachers and Teacher Trainers, 1968, hereafter referred to as ABE).

In addition to the above characteristics shared by all adult students, disadvantaged students have other characteristics in common. It should be noted that these characteristics are not confined to the disadvantaged adult person but are most likely to be evident in them.

Siegle (1960) cites several characteristics of undereducated

adults. A feeling of inferiority and lack of self-confidence is often present, frequently stemming from the fact that as children they were rarely successful in the academic world. The causes for this failure are varied and could be due to leaving school at an early age to help support the family, being a member of a migrant family with little opportunity for schooling, or having limited ability.

Purkey (1970, p. 20) has reviewed a variety of studies that indicated a "significant relationship between self-concept and academic achievement." Fink (1962) studied a group of ninth grade students to determine the relationship between academic underachievement and self-concept. Students were paired for achievement and underachievement. The self image of each student was then judged by three separate psychologists on the basis of data collected from four psychological inventories. In combining the ratings of all three psychologists, achievers were shown to have a far more adequate concept of themselves. Fink further concluded that there is a significant relationship between academic underachievement and self-concept.

Purkey (1970, p. 20) states the following:

It is a personal tragedy and a social waste when a student spends year after year experiencing defeat and failure in school. The cause of the failure and the effects of the failing experience are complex, but a continuous and central factor in both cause and effect is the way in which a student views himself and his abilities.

ABE (1968) cites another characteristic as a fear of school based on previous unhappy experiences in earlier years. Living in conditions of poverty also effected the student in a variety of ways. Usually the level of education is correlated with the level of income, with the less educated having the lower income. Crowded living conditions often

prevent a student from having a proper diet and adequate sleep. Lack of proper nutrition and sufficient sleep contributes to the student's restlessness and short attention span.

Disadvantaged adults frequently have weak motivation caused by a life history of failure. They are very easily discouraged and often have an attitude of complete resignation because of repeated failures. These students are extremely sensitive to non-verbal forms of communication. Due to limited vocabulary and limited skills in articulation these students tend to judge by action rather than by word (ABE, 1968).

Disadvantaged students frequently have a "live for today" philosophy about life. Long range planning and the concept of doing something now for a possible benefit several months away is a difficult concept for them (Knowles, 1970). They often set unrealistic goals and attempt to accomplish more than they are capable of accomplishing (Wasinger, 1974).

Implications for Teachers

The teacher of adult students must first of all know her students (Knowles, 1970), and must make every effort to support her students by accentuating the positive with her teaching and evaluating techniques (ABE, 1968).

Due to the physical differences between adult and youthful students, one of the primary responsibilities of the teacher is to provide a physically comfortable setting. It is estimated that 85 per cent of learning occurs through vision (Verner, 1971). With this in mind the use of visuals in a class of adults with eyesight impairments is extremely important. Such things as the size of type on the printed

materials and transparencies should be taken into consideration. Even with large type, materials can be difficult to read if the paper used is shiny and causes excessive glare or if there is insufficient contrast between print and background colors. Chalkboards also can be a problem either by reflecting glare and completely obscuring what is written on them or by having low contrast because they are not clean (Wasinger, 1974).

Defective hearing does not affect as many adults as does defective vision (Verner and Davison, 1971). However, some loss of hearing is to be expected among adult students, and the teacher should make necessary changes to accommodate the condition. Reducing excessive background noise and providing a quiet classroom are essential as is speaking clearly and distinctly (Verner and Davison, 1971).

Ulmer (1972) cites other requirements for a physically comfortable setting. Chairs should be suitable for the larger mass of adult bodies and should provide comfort to tired backs and stiffer joints. Environmental conditions such as heat, light and ventilation should be more than adequate. The classroom should be easily accessible without long flights of stairs.

Kidd (1959) states that if a student feels threatened by the teacher, other students or the subject matter, his mind and energies will be engaged in covering up and protecting himself and not on opening himself up to change and growth. Learning implies a change in behavior, and for adults this implies a change in self concept (Wasinger 1974). Knowles (1970, p. 43) states that "The teacher probably influences the character of the learning climate more than any single factor." Teachers must establish an atmosphere in which adults feel accepted,

respected and supported (Knowles, 1970).

These characteristics and suggested methods have implications for evaluating as well as teaching adults. Tests, if used, should be administered in an informal way; and the teacher should make sure that the test instructions are heard or easily read and are thoroughly understood by the students. Students need to be aware that tests are necessary to determine their level of achievement and educational needs (ABE, 1968).

If interviews are used as an evaluation device they should take place in the privacy of an office to avoid embarrassment or distraction to the student. Whenever possible students should be tested individually. The teacher should watch for non-verbal signs of nervousness or resignation from the student (ABE, 1968).

The ABE manual stresses that the teacher "make certain that the test is appropriate and that the teacher has actually taught the information which the test is seeking" (1968, p. 15). Thiede (1964, p. 302) cautions that evaluation should not take a disproportionate amount of time from a program. Adults should be given the opportunity to evaluate and modify evaluation devices as well as objectives.

Some evaluation problems are unique to adult education programs according to Thiede. Many adult education programs are short and informal making it difficult to accurately measure changes in student behavior. To make short program evaluation better, Thiede suggests that very specific objectives be developed. Evaluation is easier in longer, more formal adult education programs.

If performance rather than a test is to be used for evaluation a situation must be contrived to allow the student the opportunity to

display the desired behavior. These situations must be appropriate, relevant and practical (Thiede, 1964, p. 302).

It is essential that students and teachers work together to set up objectives and goals that are realistic for the students. The learning experiences should be at an appropriate level so as not to discourage the students with tasks that will be beyond their students' abilities (ABE, 1968). Wasinger (1974) says that an adult teacher must be aware that adult students expect more of themselves than they are capable of producing. Because of this teachers must help students analyze their needs and abilities and help them set realistic goals.

ABE (1968) cites one characteristic of adult students as fear of school. This along with the students' anxieties and lack of self-confidence requires great understanding from the teacher (Siegler, 1955). Wasinger (1974) states that the teacher must be friendly, informal and personal without affronting the student's sense of dignity and pride. Schueler (1957) recommends that student to student as well as student to teacher interaction be encouraged to help develop a friendly atmosphere. Ideally the teacher should be considered "a helpful neighbor who, having achieved acceptance by his social equals as their teacher, guides them in shared learning activities" (Schueler, p. 37). The result of this type of classroom atmosphere is a self-motivated student who willingly participates in learning experiences.

Weak motivation in adult students requires a variety of teaching techniques from the teacher. ABE (1968) cited several techniques to help the teacher motivate her students. First of all, was the concept of know your students, why they are in the class, and what they are trying to achieve. By being aware of the students goals and objectives

the teacher can help motivate her students by helping them move toward their goals. It is suggested that the teacher break major goals down into smaller steps or a series of "sub-goals". By accomplishing "sub-goals" students can have a feeling of success and inevitable achievement of their major goal (ABE, 1968).

ABE also suggests that personal involvement of students helps to develop motivation. This can be accomplished at all stages of the program. Schueler (1957) feels that most students have something to offer a class by sharing individual experiences and knowledge. All students should be involved in the planning of the course, its goals, learning experiences and evaluations.

A variety of learning experiences helps to build student motivation. However, ABE warns that all experiences must contribute to student growth and that "Being different...just to be different...is not the answer" (1968, p. 119).

All adult students have responsibilities outside the classroom which must be taken into consideration by the teacher. Extra class activities and assignments should be kept to a minimum or suggested as an optional activity (Ulmer, 1972). Teachers need to be aware that adults may require more time to complete a learning experience and should plan their schedule accordingly.

Summary

Chapter two has included a review of literature with a discussion of some issues of using grades with disadvantaged adult students. Evaluation in adult education, both individual and program, were also considered as were the characteristics of disadvantaged adults and

their implications for teachers. Chapter III will present the procedures used to accomplish this study. Included will be the selection of the sample, development of the data collection instruments and data gathering and recording.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURE

Introduction

This study was conducted to determine the opinions held by disadvantaged adult students toward the use of grades and grading and different aspects of satisfaction. To reach the objectives of the study the literature was reviewed to determine the characteristics of disadvantaged adult students and how these characteristics effect evaluation in adult education programs. Methods of data collection were reviewed and the questionnaire method was decided upon. Schueler (1957, p. 51) contends that

questionnaires seeking information about student's satisfactions and dissatisfactions, their reasons for continuing or not continuing can be most useful in assessing course and program effectiveness.

Hall (1962, p. 41) defines the study of current behavior or practices as descriptive studies. Among these are opinion polls and questionnaires through which participants express their opinions or give factual answers. Van Dalen (1973, p. 325) lists two possible forms of questions as the closed and the open. The closed type of question, which has the advantage of being easier to tabulate, offers a question and a choice of possible answers which the respondent marks, checks or circles. The open type of question allows the respondent to offer as much or as little detail as desired in the response and is more

difficult to tabulate. Open and closed questions were used in both instruments.

Objectives of the Study

The five objectives developed to aid this study were to determine:

1. the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading;
2. the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of a cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation;
3. the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning satisfaction of participation in an adult education program;
4. if the issuing of grades affected the opinions of disadvantaged adult students concerning satisfaction of participation in an adult education program;
5. if the issuing of grades affected the opinions of disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading.

Selection of the Sample

The population for the study was identified as those persons participating in adult education classes offered by four vocational home economics teachers from different areas of Oklahoma. The number of students participating in the classes fluctuated, but about 50 students participated. Only the participants in these classes were used as a sample because the classes were geared specifically to attract

disadvantaged adults. The researcher was not aware of other classes being offered specifically to meet the needs of disadvantaged adults. The cooperating teachers had participated in an Education Profession Development Act 553 workshop entitled; "A Developmental Approach to an In-service Program for Vocational Home Economics Teachers Who Teach Adults." This workshop was held in June 1975, and focused on the development of materials and techniques appropriate for teaching the disadvantaged adult student. The four cooperating teachers each offered an adult education class designed to meet the needs of disadvantaged adults and agreed to assist the researcher in collecting data. The classes included two clothing construction classes, one nutrition class and one consumer education class. All classes were offered free of charge.

Development of the Instruments

For this study two instruments were developed to be used as a first instrument and a second instrument to discover the opinions held by disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading, and evaluation and program satisfaction. Questions were developed in the areas of receiving or not receiving a grade, types of evaluation and testing methods and student participation in evaluation and program planning. Questions about program satisfaction were included in the second instrument and demographic questions were included in the first instrument.

After both instruments were developed they were piloted with three disadvantaged women who were identified with the help of the Payne and Noble County Community Action Foundation. First the

instruments were read to the women, then they were requested to read the instruments themselves and ask any questions about the meaning of the questions or how to respond. Minor revisions were made in the wording of some questions on the basis of the pilot.

During September 1975, the teachers participating in the workshop held a meeting at Oklahoma State University to work out final details of the program. At this meeting those teachers cooperating with the researcher were asked to read the instruments and check for the appropriateness of the questions and to suggest additions or deletions. It was suggested that a question about the need for transportation or babysitting services would be helpful to the teachers. Two questions were then added concerning these services.

Data Gathering and Recording

At the meeting held in September teachers were assigned to a treatment category. It was decided group one and two teachers would use a cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation and would issue grades. Group three and four teachers would issue no grades. The students were advised at the beginning of the class whether or not they were to be graded. The teachers and the researcher felt it would be inappropriate to issue a grade below a C on an ABCDF scale, so as not to discourage the student. The teachers were requested to make certain that the students understood the objectives they were to achieve and exactly how they were to be evaluated prior to beginning the project. The teachers who were not issuing grades were asked to follow the same procedure in identifying objectives and evaluation criteria.

All teachers were requested to read the instruments to their

classes and to allow their students time to respond to each question. This procedure was followed to allow those students with limited reading ability to understand and respond to the questions. Approximately two weeks after the September meeting the revised instruments were mailed to the teachers along with postage paid envelopes in which to return the instruments.

At the first and last meeting of the series of classes each teacher read the instrument to the students and allowed them time to respond. Completed instruments were then collected and returned to the researcher.

The data was then analyzed by grouping the answers for each question with an open response and by tabulating responses for structured questions. Percentages were then computed and tables were developed for the responses to selected questions. It was decided to use percentages as a method of analysis due to the small sample size and the difference in total number of completed instruments returned from each group. Chi square analysis was considered, however due to the small sample size, it was deemed unacceptable (Cochran, 1957).

Summary

Chapter III has described the procedure used in this study. Information has been included on the objectives, the selection of the sample, development of the instruments, and data gathering and recording. Chapter IV will present an analysis of the data which has been gathered.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

In order to reach the objectives of this study two data collection instruments were developed to be used with disadvantaged adult home economics students. These instruments were administered to the adult students who participated in the classes offered by four cooperating vocational home economics teachers in Oklahoma. The analysis of the responses to these instruments will be presented in this chapter.

Description of the Sample

The sample population consisted of the disadvantaged adult students participating in programs offered by four vocational home economics teachers in various locations in Oklahoma. These classes were offered in the following locations; Stillwell in Adair County; Keota in Haskell County; Pryor Creek in Mayes County and Boley in Okfuskee County. Each of the vocational teachers had participated in a course designed to help teachers develop materials and techniques to meet the needs of disadvantaged adult students and agreed to cooperate with the researcher in collecting data.

Each of the towns is small and is located in a rural area. Boley, population 514, is predominately black and is located in a county in

which approximately 48 per cent of the people have incomes less than 25 per cent above poverty level. Poverty level is defined as 5050 dollars per year for a family of four, and 25 per cent above poverty level is about 6300 dollars per year for a family of four. Keota, population 685, is located in a county in which approximately 43 per cent of the people have incomes less than 25 per cent above poverty. Stillwell, population 2,134, and Pryor Creek, population 7,057, have approximately 52 and 30 per cent of all people with an income less than 25 per cent above poverty, respectively. (Oklahoma Department of Institutions, Social and Rehabilitative Services, 1975).

According to 1970 census data the median income for these counties is as follows; Adair, \$3,997; Haskell, \$4,861; Mayes, \$6,255; Okfuskee, \$4,549. Although the instruments contained questions about income levels, responses were not sufficient to allow accurate reporting of a median income. However, all but one of the counties showed a median income less than poverty level according to 1970 census data. Some of the occupations listed by the participants included the following; housewife, senior citizens helper, teacher's aide, hairdresser, babysitter, sales clerk and bus driver.

Of those responding to the first instrument the age range was as follows: 18-25 years, 2 persons; 26-35 years, 13 persons; 36-45 years, 3 persons; 46-55 years, 5 persons and 56 years and older, 10 persons. Five people did not respond to this question. Approximately 77 per cent of those responding had completed 12 years or fewer of school. Table I presents this data.

The teachers in the study were requested to use one of two evaluation methods in their classes. Two of the teachers used a

TABLE I

AGE RANGE OF PARTICIPANTS AND GRADE OF SCHOOL COMPLETED

Age in Years	18-25		26-35		36-45		46-55		56+		NR
Number of Responses	1		13		4		4		16		0
Grade	3	6	8	10	11	12	Some College	B.S.	Grade School	M.S.	N.R.
Number of Responses	1	1	1	3	1	10	1	9	1	2	9

cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation and issued grades to their students using only A, B and C. It was agreed upon by the teachers and the researcher that a grade below C would be inappropriate. This practice was followed so as not to discourage the student. The other two teachers, groups three and four, gave verbal support and encouragement to their students but issued no grades.

Each teacher administered a first instrument to their students at the first class session to determine the students' opinions concerning grades prior to participating in the class. After the last class session the teachers administered the second instrument to assess the students' opinions concerning grading after having participated in the class.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study included determining the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading. It was decided to determine the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of a cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation. The opinions of disadvantaged adult students concerning satisfaction of participation were also of interest. In addition, it was decided to determine if the issuing of grades affected the students' opinions concerning the use of grades or satisfaction of participation in an education program.

Analysis of Responses

Grades and Grading

In order to determine the opinions of disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades and grading, objective number one, several questions were included in the instruments about grades. Table II shows the frequency of responses given by students when asked if they would like to receive a grade in the class. Approximately 33 per cent responded yes while an average total of about 60 per cent responded no, 7 per cent did not respond. Of those students who had more than a high school education 100 per cent did not desire to receive a grade. Of those respondents with high school or less education 45 per cent desired to receive a grade while 33 per cent did not and 22 per cent did not respond. Table III presents this data.

After the structured response question about wanting to receive a grade, respondents were asked why they did or did not want to receive a grade. Some of the responses given were as follows:

- "For my own satisfaction"
- "Just to see if I have learned"
- "To see what I make"
- "Well I would like to know if I was doing well"
- "To see how well I am progressing"
- "I would like to know how the teacher thinks I'm doing"

There were a total of 28 persons who did not respond to this part of the question. Only two of those responding to this portion of the question had negative comments. They were:

- "Not for a grade"
- "I'm interested in learning to sew, not in getting school credit"

Evaluation

In order to determine the opinions expressed by disadvantaged

TABLE II
PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING
TO RECEIVE A GRADE

Group	Yes		No		No. Response		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
<u>Graded</u>	1	1	14.0	6	86.0	0	0.0
	2	2	67.0	1	33.0	0	0.0
<u>Non-Graded</u>	3	5	28.0	11	61.0	2	11.0
	4	4	44.5	4	44.5	1	11.0
Total Average		12	33%	22	60%	3	7%

TABLE III

PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING TO RECEIVE A GRADE
 COMPARING RESPONDENTS WITH A HIGH SCHOOL
 EDUCATION TO RESPONDENTS WITH
 EDUCATION BEYOND HIGH
 SCHOOL

	Yes		No		No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Respondents with High School or Less Education	11	45	9	33	6	22
Respondents with More Than High School Education	0	0	8	100	0	0

adults concerning the use of a cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation two questions were asked. The responses to one of the questions appear in Table IV. Approximately 47.5 per cent of the respondents indicated a desire to participate in their evaluation, about 42 per cent did not want to participate, and about 10.5 per cent did not respond.

When asked if they would like to take a quiz and discuss the results with the teacher, an average total of approximately 58 per cent indicated they would not, while an average total of 26 per cent indicated they would like to discuss results with the teacher. This data is presented in Table V.

In addition to questions about participation in a cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation, respondents were questioned to determine their opinions concerning the use of written quizzes. In response to whether they would prefer to have or not to have written quizzes, an average total of 68 per cent preferred not to have written quizzes on the first instrument. On the second instrument an average total of 59 per cent preferred not to have written quizzes. On the first instrument an average total of 16 per cent would prefer to have written quizzes, while on the second instrument an average total of 13 per cent would prefer them. Table VI presents this data.

When asked if they would like to take a written quiz and grade it themselves, the following results were obtained. On the first instrument an average total of 76 per cent indicated no with an average total of 16 per cent responding yes and an average total of 8 per cent not responding. On the second instrument an average total of 52 per cent indicated they would not like to take written quizzes and grade them

TABLE IV
PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING TO
PARTICIPATE IN EVALUATION

	Group	Yes		No.		No Response	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Graded</u>	1	4	57.0	3	43.0	0	0.0
	2	2	67.0	1	33.0	0	0.0
<u>Non-Graded</u>	3	6	31.5	11	58.0	2	10.5
	4	6	67.0	1	11.0	2	22.0
<u>Total Average</u>		18	47.5%	16	42%	4	10.5%

TABLE V
PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING TO TAKE
A WRITTEN QUIZ AND DISCUSS RESULTS

Group	Yes		No		No Response	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Graded</u>						
1	1	14.0	6	86.0	0	0
2	0	0.0	3	100.0	0	0
<u>Non-Graded</u>						
3	3	16.0	10	52.0	6	32
4	6	67.0	3	33.0	0	0
Total Average	10	26%	22	58%	6	16%

TABLE VI
PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING
TO HAVE WRITTEN QUIZZES

	FIRST INSTRUMENT							SECOND INSTRUMENT						
	Group	Yes		No		No Response		Group	Yes		No		No Response	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Graded</u>	1	1	14	6	86	0	0	1	1	9	6	55	4	36
	2	0	0	3	100	0	0	2	0	0	2	100	0	0
<u>Non-Graded</u>	3	2	11	13	68	4	21	3	0	0	7	54	6	46
	4	3	33.5	4	44.5	2	22	4	4	31	8	62	1	7
Total Average		6	16%	26	68%	6	16%		5	13%	23	59%	11	28%

themselves. An average total of 21 per cent indicated they would like to take written quizzes and grade them themselves while an average total of 28 per cent indicated no response. This produced an average total of 5 per cent increase in those desiring to take written quizzes and grade them themselves after participating in the adult class. This data is presented in Table VII.

Participants were asked if they would like to take a written quiz which the teacher would grade if the grade was kept confidential. In the first instrument an average total of 18.5 per cent indicated they would like a teacher graded quiz if the grade remained confidential. An average total of 39.5 per cent indicated they would not like teacher graded quizzes while an average total of 42 per cent did not respond.

On the second instrument an average total of 29 per cent, an increase of 10.5 per cent, indicated they would like to take teacher graded quizzes if the grade was kept confidential. An average total of 32 per cent, a decrease of 7.5 per cent, indicated they would not like to take teacher graded quizzes with a confidential grade. An average total of 39 per cent did not respond on the second instrument. This data is presented in Table VIII.

Program Satisfaction

In relation to program satisfaction, students were asked on the first instrument how they found out about the class and what made them want to attend. Table IX shows the frequency of responses as to how the students found out about the class. In group four 89 per cent of the students obtained information about the class from the teacher. In this group 100 per cent of the students received information about

TABLE VII
PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING TO
SELF GRADE WRITTEN QUIZZES

	FIRST INSTRUMENT						SECOND INSTRUMENT							
	Group	Yes		No		No Response		Group	Yes		No		No Response	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Graded</u>														
	1	0	0	7	100	0	0	1	2	18	6	55	3	27
	2	0	0	3	100	0	0	2	0	0	2	100	0	0
<u>Non-Graded</u>														
	3	3	16	13	68	3	13	3	0	0	6	46	7	54
	4	3	33	6	67	0	0	4	6	46	6	46	1	8
Total Average		6	16%	29	76%	3	8%		8	21%	20	51%	11	28%

TABLE VIII

PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING TO HAVE TEACHER
GRADED QUIZZES WITH A CONFIDENTIAL GRADE

	FIRST INSTRUMENT							SECOND INSTRUMENT						
	Group	Yes		No		No Response		Group	Yes		No		No Response	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
<u>Graded</u>	1	1	14	6	86	0	0	1	0	0	6	55	5	45
	2	0	0	3	100	0	0	2	0	0	2	100	0	0
<u>Non-Graded</u>	3	2	10.5	2	10.5	15	79	3	2	17	1	8	9	75
	4	4	44.5	4	44.5	1	11	4	9	69	3	23	1	8
Total Average		7	18.5%	15	39.5%	16	42%		11	29%	12	32%	15	39%

TABLE IX
PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS REACHED BY
EACH RECRUITMENT METHOD

GROUP	Teacher		Friend		Newspaper		Child		Other		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
<u>Graded</u>	1	2	29	1	14	2	29	1	14	1	14
	2	1	33	0	0	2	67	0	0	0	0
<u>Non Graded</u>	3	5	27	8	42	4	21	1	5	1	5
	4	8	89	1	11	0	0	0	0	0	0

HOW THE STUDENTS FOUND OUT ABOUT THE CLASS

the class through some form of personal contact, either through the teacher or a friend. In group three approximately 73 per cent of the students received information about the class through personal contact. This shows an active effort on the part of the teacher to recruit students.

The comments made by the students when asked what made them want to attend the meetings were as follows:

Group 1

- "interested in home economics" (1 person)
- "to meet people and to learn about homemaking" (1 person)
- "sounded like fun" (1 person)

Group 2

- "to learn to sew" (2 people)
- "I always wanted to learn to sew" (1 person)

Group 3

- "to learn new things" (10 people)
- "interested in arts and crafts" (2 people)
- "to meet new people and maybe learn something" (1 person)
- "I love to get out and be with other ladies and make new friends friends" (1 person)
- "for enjoyment" (1 person)
- "I thought it might help me in some way" (1 person)
- "I like to try new things" (1 person)

Group 4

- "to be taught about nutrition and decoration" (1 person)
- "food and clothing" (1 person)
- "to help out the teacher" (1 person)
- "curiosity" (1 person)
- "to learn about homemaking" (1 person)
- "she made it interesting, and this made me want to come and see for myself"
- "because food is so high"
- "she did"

Group four respondents mentioned the teacher as a reason for wanting to attend the class. Other reasons cited for wanting to attend the class included both the desire for social contact and the desire to learn new skills.

To attain objective number three to determine the students'

satisfaction with the program, respondents were asked if they would attend another class if it were offered. An average total of 95 per cent indicated they would attend another class while 5 per cent indicated they would not. Everyone gave some response to this question. This data is presented in Table X. In addition to this question students were asked which class was most helpful and which was least helpful. An average total of about 24 per cent said all meetings were helpful. Concerning the class which was least helpful an average total of 74 per cent did not respond. An average total of about 84 per cent of the participants indicated they had learned what they had wanted to learn from the class.

To achieve objective number four to determine if the issuing of grades effected the opinions of disadvantaged adults concerning satisfaction of participation in an adult education program, several questions were asked. Group one and two students received a cooperatively determined grade while group three and four students did not receive a grade. When group one and two students were asked if they would participate in another program an average of 92 per cent indicated they would. Group three and four students had an approximate average of 94 per cent indicating they would participate in additional programs.

Effect of Issuing Grades

In order to determine if the issuing of grades affected the opinion of disadvantaged adult students concerning the use of grades several identical questions were included in both the first instrument and the second instrument. In the first instrument an average of 30 per cent of the graded students indicated they would like to receive a

TABLE X
 PER CENT OF RESPONDENTS DESIRING TO
 PARTICIPATE IN ADDITIONAL
 PROGRAMS

Group	Yes		No		No Response		
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
Graded	1	10	91	1	9	0	0
	2	2	100	0	0	0	0
<u>Non-Graded</u>	3	14	100	0	0	0	0
	4	12	92	1	8	0	0
Total Average		38	95%	2	5%	0	0

grade, and an average of 33 per cent of the ungraded students indicated they would like to receive a grade. However in the second instrument the students who had received a grade in the class had only an average of 8 per cent indicating a desire to receive a grade. On the second instrument an average of 32 per cent of the students who had not received a grade indicated a desire to receive a grade. There was an average of a 26 per cent decrease in those desiring to receive a grade after they had been graded.

When asked if they would become discouraged if they received a grade lower than they had expected an average of 61 per cent of group one and two students indicated they would not. A total average of 65 per cent of group three and four students indicated a low grade would not discourage them.

Summary

Two instruments were administered to four groups of disadvantaged adult home economics students to determine their opinions concerning the use of grades and satisfaction with program participation. Prior to participating in an adult education program an average total of 32 per cent of the respondents indicated they would like to receive a grade in the class. After participating in the class only an average of 8 per cent of those students who had received a grade continued to indicate a desire to receive a grade.

Concerning satisfaction of participation in the adult education program an average total of 95 per cent of the respondents indicated they would attend another class if it were offered. An average total of approximately 84 per cent of the students indicated they had

wanted to learn in the class.

Chapter IV included a description of the sample and an analysis of the responses to two instruments. A summary of the study, conclusions which were drawn from the study, and recommendations for further study are included in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

This study was undertaken to determine the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult home economics students concerning the use of grades and satisfaction of participation in an educational program. A review of literature revealed some current issues in using grades. Evaluation within the adult education program was also reviewed. Some of the characteristics of disadvantaged adult students and their implications for teaching and evaluation were also considered.

On the basis of the information gained in the review of literature, two questionnaires were developed to determine the opinions expressed by disadvantaged adult students. Questions were included concerning the students' desire to receive or not to receive a grade and concerning the students' opinion about the use of written quizzes. Several questions were included to determine the students' opinion concerning different aspects of satisfaction of participation in the adult education program.

The first instrument was used to determine the students' opinions prior to participating in an educational program. It also included questions to provide demographic information. The second instrument was used to assess the students' opinions after participation in the

adult education program.

The sample population included those students who participated in the adult education classes offered by four vocational home economics teachers in various locations in Oklahoma. Each of the teachers had participated in a course offered by Oklahoma State University in June 1975 to help teachers develop materials and techniques for teaching disadvantaged adults. All of the teachers were located in counties with a high percentage of low income adults.

Two of the teachers used a cooperative teacher/student method of evaluation and issued grades to their students. The other two teachers issued no grades but gave verbal support and encouragement to their students.

The instruments contained both open and closed response questions. After the instruments were completed and returned, the responses to open questions were grouped and responses to closed questions were tabulated. Both the total number of responses and the percentage of responses were used to present the data. The results of the analysis of the data are presented in Chapter IV.

Students were questioned to determine whether or not they desired to receive a grade for participation in an adult education class. The average total of responses on the first instrument that did not want a grade was 59.5 per cent. However, of those who responded to the portion of the question inquiring why they did or did not desire a grade all gave answers indicating a desire for some type of feedback from the teacher. The literature supports the use of grades as a form of feedback to advise students of their progress in a course. Ulmer (1972) and Knowles (1970) both cite as a characteristic of disadvantaged adults the

lack of self confidence. It concluded that some students would like to receive grades as a form of feedback and encouragement.

The responses of the students when asked if they would like to participate in the evaluation process indicated an average total of 47.5 per cent for and 42 per cent against participation in evaluation. When asked if they would like to discuss the results of written quizzes with the teacher an average total of 59 per cent indicated they would not. Fleck (1953) contends that evaluation should be a cooperative venture between the teacher and the student. However, it would appear that the majority of the students in this study did not desire to participate in the evaluation process.

On the second instrument there was an increase in the number of students in favor of a teacher graded test with a confidential grade. This again indicates a desire for feedback from the teacher.

In relation to satisfaction with participation in a program an average total of 95 per cent of the students indicated they would participate in additional programs if they were offered. Jenkins (1960) states that students can gain satisfaction with their relationship with the teacher, the other students or the subject matter. It appears that the student derived satisfaction from one or more of the listed areas considering the percentage of those indicating a desire to participate in additional programs.

Knowles (1970) states that probably the greatest influence in the adult education program is the teacher. When asked why they wanted to attend the program three of the students in group four specifically mentioned the teacher. This is in agreement with the statement by Knowles as to the influence of the teacher.

In response to the desire to receive a grade in the class there was a decrease in the number of those desiring a grade in the two groups that actually received a grade. Knowles (1970) feels that the grading of adults is demeaning. The data indicated that adults would generally prefer not to be graded.

Conclusions

On the basis of the information developed in this study the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The majority of disadvantaged adult students would prefer not to receive a grade for participation in an adult education program.
2. There are some students who would like to receive a grade as a means of feedback or communication with the teacher.
3. There is a desire on the part of some students to take written quizzes as a means of evaluation. However, they would prefer that the quizzes be teacher graded and the grade be kept confidential.
4. One of the reasons a disadvantaged adult attends an educational program is to develop new social contacts.

Recommendations

On the basis of the information developed in this study it is recommended that

1. Teachers make available the option to receive a grade for participation in an adult education program.

2. Written quizzes be used as one form of evaluation for those students desiring to take them.
3. A warm, friendly atmosphere be maintained by the teacher, both to motivate and to support the students and to encourage new social contacts between the students.
4. Further study be made of the effects of grades upon disadvantaged adult students.
5. Further study be made to determine if there is a correlation between the grade which a student receives and his opinion on grading.

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APPENDIX

INSTRUMENTS

Data Collection Instrument I

1. How did you find out about this class? _____
2. What made you want to attend this program? _____
3. Have you ever attended an adult education class before?
Yes _____ No _____
4. Are there things that you would like to learn about homemaking that are not being offered? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, please list. _____
5. Did you come with a friend _____ or relative _____? Alone _____
6. Would it help you if the hours _____ or the location _____ were changed? How would you like them changed? _____
7. Would you like to take part in evaluating how well you do in the class? Yes _____ No _____
8. Would you like to receive a grade in this class? Yes _____
No _____ Why? _____
9. Do you expect to receive a grade in this class? Yes _____ No _____
10. If you get a grade lower than you expect would it discourage you? Yes _____ No _____
11. If you had a choice would you prefer receiving _____ a grade or NOT receiving _____ a grade?
12. Would you like to help plan this class and/or future classes?
Yes _____ No _____
13. Would you prefer NOT to have written quizzes _____ or to have _____ written quizzes in this class?
14. Would you like to have written quizzes and then correct them yourself? Yes _____ No _____
15. Would you like to take written quizzes and then discuss your results with the teacher after the teacher had corrected it?
Yes _____ No _____
16. Would you like to take a written quiz which the teacher would correct if your grade was kept confidential? Yes _____ No _____
17. Would your age be 18-25 _____ 26-35 _____ 36-45 _____ 45-55 _____ 56+?
18. What grade have you completed in school? _____
19. How many people live in your house? _____
20. How many children live in your house? _____
21. Are you employed? Yes _____ No _____
22. What is your occupation? If housewife, please list. _____
23. What is your approximate income per month? _____

24. Would it help you attend if transportation were provided?
Yes _____ No _____
25. Would it help you attend if babysitting were provided?
Yes _____ No _____

Data Collection Instrument II

1. Would you attend another class if it were offered?
Yes _____ No _____
2. Would it help you if the Hours _____ or Location _____ were changed?
3. Have you missed any of the class meetings? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, why? Sickness _____ No transportation _____
Bad weather _____ Already knew what was being
covered _____ Other _____
4. Can you think of anything that you have learned in class that you
have used at home? Yes _____ No _____
If yes, what? _____
5. Which meeting was most helpful? _____
6. Which meeting was least helpful? _____
7. Have you learned the things that you wanted to? Yes _____ No _____
8. Would you like to be More _____ or Less _____ involved in the
planning of the class?
9. What other types of homemaking classes would you like offered?

10. Would you have liked to have helped evaluate how well you did in
the class? Yes _____ No _____
11. Would you have liked to have received a grade in this class?
Yes _____ No _____
12. Why or why not? _____
13. Do you expect to receive a grade in this class? Yes _____ No _____
14. If you get a grade lower than you expected would it discourage
you? Yes _____ No _____
15. If you had a choice would you to receive _____ or not to receive
a grade?
16. Would you like to help plan future classes? Yes _____ NO _____
17. Would you prefer Not to have written quizzes _____ or to have
written _____ quizzes?
18. Would you have liked to have taken a written quiz and then grade it
yourself? Yes _____ No _____
19. Would you have liked to have taken a written quiz and then discuss
your results with the teacher after the teacher had graded it?
Yes _____ No _____
20. Would you have liked to have taken a written quiz that the teacher
would have corrected if your grade was kept confidential? Yes _____
No _____
21. Would it help you to attend future classes if transportation were
provided? Yes _____ No _____
22. Would it help you attend future classes if babysitting were
provided? Yes _____ No _____
23. Would you age be 18-25 _____ 26-35 _____ 36-45 _____ 46-55 _____ 56+? _____
24. What grade have you completed in school? _____

VITA

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Master of Science

Thesis: A SURVEY OF THE OPINIONS OF DISADVANTAGED ADULT HOME
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