

FACTORS WHICH DETER ADULTS AGED 55 AND
OLDER FROM PARTICIPATING IN ADULT
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

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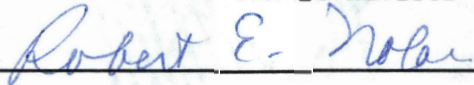
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The American society is aging (Aslanian, 1980, p. 1). The population has increased dramatically in the past two decades. In 1985, persons aged 65 and older numbered 28.5 million. This was 12 percent of the total American population. The number of persons aged 65 and older will continue to increase for many years. The most rapid growth period is predicted to occur between the years 2010 and 2030, when the "baby boom" generation will reach age 65. By the year 2000 persons aged 65 and older are expected to represent 13 percent of the population. In the year 2030 this percentage is expected to increase to 21.2 percent, or about 65 million, two and one-half times their number in 1980 (American Association of Retired Persons, 1986). The baby boom generation, born between 1946 and 1964, is definitely a phenomenon to be considered for the next 50 years or longer (Long, 1983, p. 13).

The American Association of Retired Persons (A.A.R.P.) published a study in 1986 which contained demographic information about adults aged 65 and older in America. Ninety percent of the persons aged 65 and older were white, eight percent were black, and two percent of other races (A.A.R.P., 1986).

The median income for persons aged 65 and older was \$10,900 for males and \$6,313 for females in 1985. Social Security was the major

source for their income (35 percent) followed by asset income (26 percent), earnings (23 percent), public and private pensions (14 percent), and Supplemental Social Security, unemployment and veterans payments (two percent combined). About three and one half million persons aged 65 and older were below the poverty line (National Center for Education Statistics, 1984).

Approximately 11 percent of persons aged 65 and older were in the labor force in 1985. They represented three percent of the American labor force (A.A.R.P., 1986).

The educational levels of adults aged 65 and older have increased. From 1970 to 1985 their median education level increased from 8.7 years to 11.7 years. The percentage of adults aged 65 and older who had completed high school rose from 28 percent to 48 percent from 1970 to 1985 (National Center for Education Statistics, 1984).

"Too old to learn" and "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" are two examples of the negative comments one is likely to hear about older adults. Older persons are just as likely to say this about themselves. Since the educational system is youth oriented, the older learners look and feel out of place (Borthwick, 1983, p. 21).

Spouse (1981) states in "Participation Motivations of Older Adult Learners,"

While education for the young is primarily viewed as economic (preparing for a career), education for older adults can have many purposes. one of these is to implant skills or training, perhaps in preparation for a second career. A second purpose is recreation: classes that teach such things as sports or crafts. A third purpose relates to preparing older adults for retirement, as acquainting them with the processes of aging. Finally, there is a liberal or academic education, where education is offered and taken for the sake of learning (p. 2).

The question of why adults participate or why they do not is complex. There have been several studies conducted about participation by adults in educational activities but few studies about deterrents to participation. Motivational theories of participation frequently identify "deterrents to participation construct" as an explanation for nonparticipation (Brockett and Darkenwald, 1987, p. 34). The deterrent to participation construct is a conceptual model of barriers to participation in adult educational activities which consists of multidimensional and interrelated factors. But research concerning deterrents to participation is limited (Wolf, 1985, p. 8).

Research about participation is important for public policy purposes. An understanding of why adults participate in educational activities is important for designing effective policies and programs which can open up opportunities for disadvantaged groups (Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982).

Long (1987), who conducted several studies about the participation rates of older adults, states that

Despite the benefits attributed to educational participation by adult educators and educational gerontologists, rates of participation frequently have been disappointingly low. National surveys have consistently revealed that a decline in participation is apparent after age 50 and extremely conspicuous after age 60 (p. 119).

Providers of education make few attempts to address the needs of older adults, although in recent years there has been improvement in this regard. Educators are discovering that older people are potential learners (Wolf, 1985).

It is usually harder to find out why people do not participate

than why they do (Cross, 1981, p. 77). Research has noted that deterrent to participation constructs "are multidimensional and vary in structure for each subgroup of the adult population" (Brockett and Darkenwald, 1987, p. 34). Research about deterrents to participation in adult educational activities, or "deterrent research," is important for program planning, marketing, and theory building (Brockett and Darkenwald, 1987, p. 34).

Problem Statement

Older adults tend to participate in organized adult educational activities at lower rates than do adults in general.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors deterring adults aged 55 and older from participating in adult educational activities.

Need for the Study

There is a need to identify factors which deter adults aged 55 and older from participating in adult educational activities. Once the factors have been identified, they can be addressed in order to facilitate participation by adults aged 55 and older.

Definitions of Terms

Adult Basic Education (ABE) - A federally funded program for persons 18 years of age and older. The program was offered to educationally disadvantaged persons to help them develop reading,

writing, language and mathematical skills.

Adult Educational Activities - Classes or group sessions of adults who have met for the purpose of education, to include recreational classes and noncredit courses.

American Association of Retired Persons (A.A.R.P.) - An association for persons aged 50 and older. A nonprofit nonpartisan organization, it was established in 1958 in order to better the lives of older Americans through service advocacy, education and volunteer efforts. Research is conducted and funded within the organization.

Anomia - The state of alienation.

Deterrent - That which prevents, frightens or inhibits a person.

Deterrent to Participation Construct - A conceptual model of barriers to participation in adult education activities which consists of multidimensional and interrelated factors.

Deterrents to Participation Scale (DPS) - A questionnaire which discovers information about factors which deter people from participating in adult educational activities. It was designed to be utilized with physical therapists, medical technologists, and respiratory therapists. The six deterrent factors are work constraints, quality, benefit, family constraints, cost, and disengagement.

Deterrents to Participation Scale General (DPS-G) - A questionnaire which discovers information about factors which deter people from participating in adult educational activities. It was designed for the general adult population. The six deterrent factors are lack of confidence, lack of course relevance, time constraints,

low personal priority, cost, and personal problems.

Deterrents to Participation Scale Low-Literate (DPS-LL) - A questionnaire which discovers information about factors which deter people from participating in adult educational activities. It was designed for low literate persons. The five deterrent factors are low self-confidence, social disapproval, negative attitude toward classes, low personal priority, and situational barriers.

Older Adults - Chronologically mature persons of a nonspecific age range of adults.

Population

The population consisted of 80 adults aged 55 and older from Tulsa and surrounding areas. They were surveyed during the annual Christmas luncheon at Southminster and Eastside Senior Citizen Centers. The luncheons were held on December 13, 1991 and December 19, 1991, respectively.

Assumption

The adults participating in the study answered the questions accurately and honestly.

Limitations

1. The participants in the study were not chosen randomly.
2. The population was limited to adults aged 55 and older at Southminster and Eastside Senior Citizen Centers in Tulsa, Oklahoma.
3. The population may not be representative of all adults aged 55 and older.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Literature was reviewed which addressed education and motivation factors affecting older adults, education and deterrent factors, deterrent factors affecting older adults, and the deterrents to participation scale.

Education and Motivation Factors

Affecting Older Adults

Boshier and Riddell (1979) conducted a study utilizing the short form of the Education Participation Scale with 84 older adults. The mean age of the respondents was 70.2 (p. 167). Factors identified by the Education Participation Scale are escape/stimulation, social welfare, social contact and cognitive interest. The participants noted cognitive interest and social contact as motivators (p. 165).

The state of transition from one phase in life to another is what motivates most adults to participate in adult educational activities. Future Directions for a Learning Society conducted a study on motivation and adult learning. Fifty-six percent of the transitions cited in the study were changes in career status. Family life, health and leisure time were the other transitions (Queeney, p. 3).

Fisher (1987) states,

The role transition between adulthood and older adulthood often involves retirement, relocation, loss of spouse, adaptation to a lower socioeconomic status, and, coupled with the physiological and psychological changes which accompany aging provides a broad setting in which to foster anomia (p. 79).

Adults aged 65 and older who participated in adult educational activities and lower levels of anomia, or alienation, than did nonparticipants (Fisher, 1986, p. 204). Adult aged 55 and older who are educationally active are more likely to have a better outlook on life, higher self concept and more enjoyment of living (Fisher, 1987, p. 79).

Fisher (1987) conducted a study with adults aged 55 and older about levels of satisfaction with themselves, the qualities of their environments and their levels of participation in educational activities. Two populations were surveyed. In the first group a survey instrument was utilized with 786 subjects at eight different settings. In the second group a structured interview was conducted with 69 subjects in three different settings.

Fisher (1987) states,

A summary of these findings indicates that in both populations there is a statistically significant relationship between Anomia and Zest and Participation in Educational Activities and between Life Satisfaction, Mood Tone, and Zest and Self-Directed Learning Participation (p. 80).

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) noted that participants in comparison to nonparticipants in adult educational activities tend to be younger, white, better educated, and more affluent. Participation studies have consistently noted that older adults, minorities, and

adults who do not have a lot of education often dislike and avoid educational activities.

Education and Deterrent Factors

One of the first studies conducted about deterrent factors in adult educational activities occurred in 1965. Johnstone and Rivera (1965) conducted a study that consisted of four phases. It provided an overview of adult education in the United States. A small section of the research included barriers to participation. The "barriers to participation" data were gathered by a self-administered questionnaire which listed ten reasons adults gave for not participating in adult educational activities. The reasons were categorized as situational or dispositional. Situational reasons were influences external to the individual, or at least beyond the individual's control, and dispositional reasons were based on personal attitude or disposition toward participation. Their findings were that women are more likely than men to feel housebound and too tired at night to attend adult educational activities. Financial considerations were cited more by younger adults as barriers. Older adults felt that their ages hindered them. Adults with low socioeconomic status did not know about the adult education programs offered in their community. Adults with high socioeconomic status cited time as a barrier (p. 217-219).

Cross and Valley reported about the findings of a national research project conducted in 1972 for the Educational Testing Service. The subjects were identified as either learners if they had

attended a class within the past year, or "would be" learners if they reported interest in learning. The "would be" learners selected reasons for nonparticipation from a list of 24. Money was most often cited, followed by time. Another finding was that men reported job and time as barriers to learning. Women and older adults noted low energy levels as a barrier. Women cited child care problems. Older adults stated that they were too old to learn. Little formal education and low grades were barriers (pp. 47-48).

Cross (1981) discussed three classifications of obstacles to adult learning. They are situational, institutional and dispositional. Situational barriers are those arising from one's personal life. Lack of time, money, child care and transportation are examples of situational barriers. Institutional barriers are those created by the educational system. Inconvenient schedules, locations, fees, and inappropriate courses are examples of institutional barriers. Dispositional barriers are those related to the learner's attitude. Age, educational background and self esteem are examples of dispositional barriers (p. 98).

Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984) wanted to identify the reasons adults gave for not participating in continuing education. The populations studied were physical therapists, medical technologists, and respiratory therapists who were currently employed. Data were collected by mailing the Deterrents to Participation Scale (DPS) with a pre-paid return envelope. The mean age of the population sampled was 34 and the majority was female. Six factors were identified from the study. They are, from the highest barrier to the lowest: work

constraints, quality, benefit, family constraints, cost, and disengagement (p. 164).

Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) identified the factors which deter the general public from participating in adult educational activities. They developed a revised form of the DPS for the general adult population, Deterrents to Participation Scale General (DPS-G) a 34-item questionnaire. The DPS-G was mailed to 2000 random households in Somerset County, New Jersey, one of the wealthiest counties in America. Two hundred and fifteen questionnaires were returned. The mean age of respondents was 42.6. The majority was female (62.3 percent), employed full-time (60.9 percent), well educated and affluent.

Six deterrent factors were identified from the study. They are time constraints, lack of course relevance, low personal priority, cost, personal problems, and lack of confidence (pp. 181-184). Subjects with little education or low income and older adults identified lack of confidence as barriers. Cost was a concern for women, young adults, and adults with little education and low income. Family problems were barriers for women. Time was a problem for working adults (p. 185).

In 1986, Hays and Darkenwald identified deterrent factors for low-literate adults. They devised the Deterrents to Participation Scale Low-Literate (DPS-LL) from the DPS-G. The DPS-LL is a 32-item questionnaire. The questionnaires were administered to 160 Adult Basic Education students. Sixty-eight percent of the population was female, 51 percent aged 26 or younger, 60 percent unemployed, 65

percent black, 22 percent Hispanic, and eight percent white (p. 131).

Five deterrent factors were identified from the study. They were low self-confidence, social disapproval, negative attitude toward classes, low personal priority, and situational barriers. Low self-confidence correlated positively with age. Negative attitude to classes and low personal priority correlated negatively with age. Female, unemployed and family correlated positively with situational barriers (pp. 131-132).

Quigley (1987) conducted a study with Adult Basic Education (ABE) resisters.

ABE resisters were rejecting the values of the dominant culture, learner-grounded values, ethics, cultural systems, and emotional supports are required as part of a 'learner-grounded system' of basic education. Math, reading, science and history were not the issue with this sample. The normative values and assumptions underlying schooling were. Consequently, learner-grounded programs should be designed by and with resisters (p. 69).

Quigley (1987) noted that the field of adult education needs new and more effective ways to meet the needs of various groups (p. 202).

Martindale and Drake (1989) conducted a study with Air Force personnel. Purposes of the study were to verify that DPS-G could be utilized by all populations as Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) had indicated, and identify factors which deter participation by Air Force personnel in educational programs. The subjects studies were 2,734 enlisted personnel at an Air Force base in Alabama. The respondents' mean age was 30 years. Sixty-eight percent were male, 32 percent were female, 80 percent were white, 16 percent were black, and four percent were of other races.

Eight factors were identified from the study. They were lack of course relevance, lack of confidence, cost, time constraints, lack of convenience, lack of interest, family problems and lack of encouragement. The eight factors cited in this study were consistent with the previous study conducted by Darkenwald and Valentine (1985). The Martindale and Drake (1989) study supported the hypothesis that the DPS-G was appropriate for the general adult population (pp. 63-73).

Valentine and Darkenwald (1990) attempted to explain the deterrent construct by describing types of adults as defined by their perceived deterrents to participation in adult educational activities. Five types of adults described by their deterrents to participation were identified from the study.

Type One were the adults deterred by personal problems. This was the largest subgroup (29.5 percent). Family, child care, health problems, handicaps and location of classes were deterrents to participation in adult education for this subgroup. Type Two were adults who lacked confidence. This subgroup was the second largest (27.1 percent). The adults in this subgroup were in a position to attend activities but lacked confidence. Type Three were the adults deterred by educational costs. This was the smallest cluster (12.9 percent). The adults in this cluster were mainly young women with the confidence to participate in adult educational activities but for whom cost was a barrier.

Type Four were the people with little or no interest in adult education. This subgroups was the second smallest (14.3 percent).

The people in this subgroup placed little value on adult education. Type Five were adults not interested in available courses. This was the third largest cluster (16.2 percent). The adults in this subgroup placed a high value on adult education but the courses offered did not meet their needs (pp. 29-41).

Deterrent Factors Affecting Older Adults

In 1981 Heisel, along with others, conducted a study to research the general patterns of education participation by adults aged 60 and older. The data were collected from the National Center for Education Statistics (1981). The subjects were divided into subgroups by age. The age groups were 60 to 64, 65 to 69, and 70 and older. The study found that adults aged 60 and older who did not engage in educational activities tended to be black, male and of low educational attainment. Participation dropped off dramatically after the 60 to 64 age group (pp. 231-232).

Peterson (1981) noted that older adults did not participate in educational activities because of declining health, transportation problems, lack of self esteem, no interest and lack of knowledge about adult education programs. According to Peterson, older adults were the population least served by adult education programs and had less formal education than their younger counterparts. Peterson implied that older adults are under educated as compared to other age groups. He concluded that the older one gets the less likely one is to participate in educational activities (pp. 245-247).

Borthwick (1981) noted that lifelong learning was necessary for everyone in order to deal with change. The number of persons aged 65

and older keep increasing and so the educational system for them needs to be redesigned. According to Borthwick, barriers to adult education need to be examined with the older adult population. Through examining the barriers, Borthwick found that mobility was often a problem. The cost of gasoline, car maintenance, increasing loss of physical functions, and the decline in sensory acuity not only limit the actual ability of persons aged 65 and older to transport themselves from one place to another, but also significantly affect their perceptions of personal mobility (Borthwick, pp. 11-12).

Most of the income for adults aged 65 and older is fixed. The cost of living is always increasing. So, many adults aged 65 and older must spend their money on basic necessities. They have little or no money to spend on education or social activities. Participation needs to be encouraged by determining what barriers keep the adults aged 65 and older away from existing programs in order to develop a strategy for eliminating the barriers (Borthwick, pp. 1-31)

Fisher (1983) identified the characteristics of active older adults who participated in adult educational activities and then measured the factors that motivated them. The dependent variables were participation and nonparticipation in adult educational activities, while the independent variables were educational attainment, anomia, life satisfaction and learning-related factors. Fisher utilized a survey instrument with 786 older adults at eight different places for older adults. The majority of the subjects in

the study were aged 55 to 74 (73.6 percent) and female (78.3 percent). Comparison was made with participants in adult educational activities and nonparticipants in adult educational activities on the basis of age, gender, marital status, and occupational status.

The participants in adult educational activities varied from the nonparticipants in adult educational activities on each of the independent variables except life satisfaction. Participants in adult educational activities had achieved an educational level slightly above grade 12. Nonparticipants in adult educational activities had reached educational levels slightly below grade 12. The adult educational participants felt less alienated than did the adult educational nonparticipants. Participants in adult educational activities were more likely to be involved in self-directed learning activities than were adult educational nonparticipants.

Participants in adult educational activities were able to name facilities where educational programs were offered, while nonparticipants in adult educational activities were less inclined to name facilities. Nonparticipants in adult educational activities were unable to identify as many topics about which they would be interested in learning as were the participants in adult educational activities able to identify. Participants in adult educational activities were more aware of the obstacles to participation than were nonparticipants in adult educational activities. The obstacles listed by the participants were lack of transportation, night classes, self-directed learning, irrelevant courses, money, time,

lack of a felt need to learn, apathy, health problems, and classes held in unsafe areas.

Fisher (1983) concluded that there were basic differences between participants in adult educational activities and nonparticipants in adult educational activities among the active older adult subjects. He discovered that participation is related to prior educational experiences, confidence in relationships with others, tendency to engage in self-directed learning activities, awareness of the availability of educational programs, and interest in topics for future learning (Fisher, 1983, pp. 1-7).

Pevoto (1989) conducted a study to examine why adults aged 65 and older do not participate in adult educational activities. The age range he specifically wanted to examine was 65 to 74 years of age. The study was conducted in Houston, Texas at seven various senior citizen centers with 33 subjects. The 33 subjects were identified by the centers' administrators as having participated in adult educational activities or not.

The study was conducted with open-ended questions. All interviews were taped except one. Five of the 33 were participating in organized educational activities at the centers. The subjects who were inactive at the centers were also inactive at home. Formal education ranged from no education to two years of post secondary education. Several of the subjects stated they worked at home and did not have time for school while growing up. Twenty-seven of the subjects had less than a high school education. Nineteen of the subjects exhibited poor self-images. Nine of the subjects thought

that their age was a barrier to their participation in adult educational activities. Several of the subjects were not interested in the courses that were offered. They wanted relevant courses that would contribute something to their lives. Twenty-five of the subjects thought that continuing education was very important. Pevoto noted that the educational and learning needs of the 33 subjects were not being met. The subjects in this study did not have any input into the programs offered at the centers (pp. 1-13).

Deterrents to Participation Scale

Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984) attempted to identify the various reasons adults give for not participating in adult educational activities and identify the deterrent factors which distinguish participants from nonparticipants in adult educational activities. Motivational orientation factors have not been adequate in discriminating between participants and nonparticipants. There have been several studies conducted about participation but few studies of comparable quality have examined what deters participation. Acknowledging that research was inadequate in the area of deterrent to participation constructs gave Scanlan and Darkenwald incentive to develop the Deterrent Participation Scale (DPS), a questionnaire which requested information about respondents' personal backgrounds and their involvements in adult educational activities. The DPS was established for use with physical therapists, medical technologists, and respiratory therapists.

Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) then devised a generic form of the DPS to identify the factors that deter the general adult

population from participating in adult educational activities. The original DPS had been limited by external validity. The results could not be generalized to all health professionals, much less the general adult population.

In the first phase of development of the DPS-G, an interview schedule was established to obtain information about deterrents to participation from a diverse group of adults. In the second phase, a prototype of the DPS-G was developed by grouping statements about deterrents to participation, reviewing the literature, and examining the original DPS. Fifty-eight items were retained for the pretest.

One hundred seventeen adults completed the prototype DPS-G to assess item clarity. The DPS-G was then improved and shortened by revising and deleting certain items. The items which were deleted received very low mean scores and low item scale correlations. Similar items were collapsed together for the DPS-G. The DPS-G is made up of 34 questions, which are scored "one" for "not important," "two" for "slightly important," "three" for "somewhat important," "four" for "quite important," and "five" for "very important."

Six factors were identified from the study. They are lack of confidence, lack of course relevance, time constraints, low personal priority, cost, and personal problems (See Table I). The six factors identified in this study represent meaningful components of the deterrent construct. This study suggests that deterrents to participation are due to multiple reasons (pp. 177-187).

Summary

Older adults who participate in adult educational activities

tend to be white, well educated and more affluent (Darkenwald and Merriam, 1982).

Deterrents to participation research has greatly improved over the years. Scanlan (1986) noted that deterrents to participation in adult education is a multidimensional concept which has several variables. These variables are influenced by the person's perceived barriers to participation (p. 1). Several barriers were noted but the barriers most often cited were lack of course relevance, personal problems, time, cost, family, work, and lack of confidence.

Peterson (1981) noted that older adults are the population least served by adult educational activities. There are multiple reasons for nonparticipation by older adults in adult educational activities, but the barriers most often cited are money, health, transportation, low self esteem, and low education attainment.

TABLE I

DPS-G ITEMS ACCORDING TO FACTORS AND SCALE RANKING

DPS-G Scale Rank

Factor 1: Lack of Confidence

- 18 Because I didn't think I would be able to finish the course.
- 19 Because I was not confident of my learning ability.
- 26.5 (tie) Because I felt I couldn't compete with younger students.
- 26.5 (tie) Because my family did not encourage participation.
- 28 Because I felt unprepared for the course.
- 29 Because I felt I was too old to take the course.
- 31 Because I didn't meet the requirements for the course.
- 33 Because my friends did not encourage my participation.

Factor 2: Lack of Course Relevance

- 8 Because I didn't think the course would meet my needs.
- 9 Because the available courses did not seem useful or practical.
- 11 Because the courses available did not seem interesting.
- 12 Because I wanted to learn something specific, but the course was too general.
- 15 Because the course was not on the right level for me.
- 21 Because the courses available were of poor quality.

TABLE I (Continued)

DPS-G Scale Rank

Factor 3: Time constraints

- 1 Because the course was scheduled at an inconvenient time.
- 2 Because the course was offered at an inconvenient location.
- 3 Because I didn't have the time for the studying required.
- 4 Because I didn't think I could attend regularly.
- 6 Because of the amount of time required to finish the course.

Factor 4: Low Personal Priority

- 5 Because participation would take away from time with my family.
- 7 Because I wasn't willing to give up my leisure time.
- 17 Because I don't enjoy studying.
- 22 Because I'm not that interested in taking courses.
- 25 Because education would not help me in my job.

Factor 5: Cost

- 13.5 (tie) Because I couldn't afford the registration or course fees.
- 20 Because I couldn't afford miscellaneous expenses like travel, books, etc.
- 23 Because my employer would not provide financial assistance or reimbursement.

TABLE I (Continued)

DPS-G Scale Rank

Factor 6: Personal Problems

10	Because the course was offered in an unsafe area.
16	Because I had trouble arranging for child care.
30	Because of family problems.
34	Because of a personal health problem or handicap.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors deterring adults aged 55 and older from participating in organized adult educational activities. This chapter explains the design of the study, administration of the instrument, and method of analysis.

Design of the Study

A questionnaire was designed to gather demographic information about gender, age, educational background and income. The demographic instrument was pretested by a group of eight adults aged 51 to 82 from the Physical Performance Center. They all had college degrees and were very active physically. As a result of the pretest, some changes were made to the format of the instrument. Items were spaced further apart and the size of the type was increased.

The Deterrents to Participation Scale General [DPS-G] (Darkenwald and Valentine, 1985) was adapted by typesetting the questionnaire in large print for easier reading by adults aged 55 and older who may have trouble reading small print. The instrument was explained in detail in Chapter II.

Administration of the Instrument

The questionnaires were administered on December 13, 1991 at

Southminster Senior Citizen Center and on December 19, 1991 at Eastside Senior Citizen Center. The senior citizen centers are located in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The directors of the centers chose the annual Christmas luncheon for the administration of the instrument because the turnout is greatest at this activity.

There were two tables at the front door. The participants at the luncheon paid their money for the luncheon at the first table. At the second table, they were given the questionnaires and instructions. Eighty of the 129 participants at the luncheon volunteered to respond to the questionnaire. The respondents were informed not to put their names on the questionnaires. An oral assurance of confidentiality was given after the instrument was handed out. The questionnaires were not coded to identify the respondents. Assistance was given to those who required it. Several of the respondents wanted the questionnaires read out loud to them, and a few of those persons provided responses verbally. When the luncheon was over, the director asked the respondents to turn in the questionnaires and, if they had questions or needed more assistance, to go to the table at the entrance. Seventy-four persons returned their questionnaires at the luncheon, and six of the respondents turned in their questionnaires during the next week.

Method of Analysis

Frequencies and percentages were calculated for demographic information. The demographic information included respondent gender. The average age of the respondents was calculated. Ages were

categorized as follows, 55 to 65, 66 to 75, 76 to 85, and 86 and older. Highest educational credential and total family income data were recorded and tabulated.

The 34-item DPS-G was utilized for the study. The DPS-G items were ranked one through 34. The DPS-G items were scored "one" for "not important," "two" for "slightly important," "three" for "somewhat important," "four" for "quite important," and "five" for "very important." DPS-G item scores for the 80 surveys were tallied. The average item mean was calculated for each variable. The number was multiplied by the score on the Likert scale (1-5) and then divided by 80. The standard deviation was tabulated for each variable. The standard deviation was calculated by the square root of the mean of the squared deviations from the mean.

The DPS-G item scores for the 80 respondents were summed across the six deterrent factors from the DPS-G (See Table I). The six deterrent factors were ranked one through six. A mean score was determined for each factor then a mean of the means was calculated and became the factor score. Each factor score was divided by the number of questions (for example, eight items for lack of confidence, six items for lack of course relevance, five items for time constraints, five items for personal priority, three items for cost, and four items for personal problems). Each total score was then divided by the number of respondents. The average item mean was summed for each deterrent factor and the standard deviation was tabulated.

The deterrent factor scores were utilized to correlate the demographic information in order to examine the relationship between

the factor scores and the demographic information. The Spearman Rank Order Correlation was implemented in order to analyze the information (Anderson-Bell Corporation, 1989). Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) used the Spearman Rank Order Correlation in their study. To be consistent with their study, the Spearman Rank Order Correlation was also used in the present study. It determines the degree of association between two variables that have been rank ordered.

The demographic information utilized in the analysis was scored in the following ways:

- a) gender: 0 = female, 1 = male;
- b) age: number of years;
- c) family income: 1 = less than \$15,000, 2 = \$15,000 to \$29,999, 3 = \$30,000 to \$44,999, 5 = \$45,000 or more; and
- d) education: 1 = no credential, 2 = high school diploma, 3 = associate degree, 4 = bachelor's degree, and 5 = graduate degree.

The demographic information was also correlated with deterrent factor scores utilizing the Mann-Whitney U Test, and Kruskal Wallis One-Way Anova by Rank (Anderson-Bell Corporation, 1989). These analyses were examined to discover if the results received similar correlations as the Spearman Rank Order Correlation did. The Mann-Whitney U Test was used for gender because there are two levels (female and male). The Mann-Whitney U Test is used to test whether two independent samples have been drawn from the same population. It is utilized best when there are two variables considered in the analysis. The demographic information concerning gender was scored female = 0 and male = 1. The Kruskal-Wallis One-Way Anova by Rank

is utilized when the data consist only of ranks. It was utilized with age, family income and education.

The demographic information was scored:

- a) age: 0 = 65 and under, 1 = 66 and over;
- b) education: 1 = no credential, 2 = high school diploma, 3 = college degree; and
- c) family income: 1 = less than \$15,000, 2 = \$15,000 to \$29,999, and 3 = \$30,000 and up.

Summary

This chapter explained the methodology used in the study by describing the design of the study, the administration of the instrument, and the method of analysis. Adults aged 55 and older from Southminster and Eastside Senior Citizen Centers were surveyed for this study. The DPS-G was administered to 80 volunteer respondents of the 129 persons present for the luncheon.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results of the surveys conducted on December 13, 1991 at Southminster Senior Citizen Center and on December 19, 1991 at Eastside Senior Citizen Center in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The demographic information identifies characteristics of the respondents to the survey. The results are analyzed to identify factors which deter adults aged 55 and older from participation in adult educational activities.

Return Rate

One hundred twenty-nine older adults attended the annual Christmas luncheons. Eighty adults aged 55 and older volunteered to respond to the survey. They represent 62 percent of the total population. Table II identifies the total number of persons who attended the luncheon at the two centers and the number of respondents in the survey.

Characteristics of Respondents

Table III identifies the gender of the respondents. The data from each center were analyzed and totaled. The average age of all respondents was 74.8 years. The average age of respondents at Southminster was 75.2 years. The average age of males at

TABLE II
NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS TO THE DPS-G BY CENTER

Number	Southminster	Eastside	Total
Respondents	53	27	80
Non Respondents	23	26	49
Total	76	53	129

TABLE III
GENDER OF RESPONDENTS TO THE DPS-G BY CENTER

Gender	Southminster	Eastside	Total
Female	35	17	52
Male	18	10	28
Total	53	27	80

Southminster was 74.1 years and of females was 74.9 years. The average age of respondents at Eastside was 74 years. At Eastside the average age of males was 72.6 years and of females 74.9 years. Table IV indicates age categories of the respondents at each center.

Table V reveals the highest educational credential of the respondents. Each center was reported. The largest group of the respondents had earned only high school diplomas (41.2 percent).

Table VI identifies the income level of respondents in the study. Each center was noted. The largest group of respondent (62.5 percent) income levels were \$15,000 or less.

Deterrents to Participation Scale General

Adults aged 55 and older who participated in the survey were asked to indicate from the 34-item Deterrents to Participation Scale (DPS-G) how important each reason was in their decision not to participate in adult educational activities. The tables which follow contain a listing of item mean, standard deviation, and DPS-G rank score for each variable.

The six deterrent factors utilized in the Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) study are also used in this study. They are personal problems, time constraints, lack of confidence, lack of course relevance, cost, and low personal priority.

"Personal problems" was the highest ranked deterrent factor. Table VII shows that the average item mean for the factor, or the factor mean, was 1.91 with a standard deviation of 0.85. The highest ranked variable in this factor was "because of transportation problems."

TABLE IV
AGE OF RESPONDENTS TO THE DPS-G BY CENTER

Age	Southminster	Eastside	Total
55-65	6	4	10
66-75	20	12	32
76-85	20	8	28
86-Older	7	3	10
Total	53	27	80

TABLE V
HIGHEST EDUCATION CREDENTIAL OF RESPONDENTS TO THE
DPS-G BY CENTER

Highest Education Credential	Southminster	Eastside	Total
No Credential	15	10	25
High School Diploma	20	13	33
Associate Degree	8	1	9
Bachelor's Degree	5	3	8
Graduate Degree	5	0	5
Total	53	27	80

TABLE VI
TOTAL FAMILY INCOME OF RESPONDENTS TO THE DPS-G BY CENTER

Income	Southminster	Eastside	Total
Less than \$15,000	32	18	50
\$15,000 to \$29,999	15	8	23
\$30,000 to \$44,999	5	1	6
\$45,000 or more	1	0	1
Total	53	27	80

TABLE VII
"PERSONAL PROBLEM" DETERRENENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATIONAL
ACTIVITIES BY ITEM MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND DPS-G RANK

Variables	Item Mean	Standard Deviation	DPS-G Rank
Because of transportation problems	2.70	1.84	1
Because of a personal health problem or handicap	2.55	1.78	3
Because the course was offered in an unsafe area	2.00	1.64	8
Because of family problems	1.23	0.84	28
Because I had trouble arranging for child care	1.05	0.45	31.5

"Because I had trouble arranging for child care" received a low item mean score of 1.05, and was not a deterrent for most subjects in the study.

"Time constraints" was the second highest ranked deterrent factor. Table VIII indicates that the average item mean for the factor was 1.79 with a standard deviation of 0.89. The highest ranked variable in this factor was "because the course was offered at an inconvenient location."

"Lack of confidence" was the third highest ranked deterrent factor. Table IX demonstrates that the average item mean for this factor was 1.64 with a standard deviation of 0.82. The highest ranked variable in this factor was "because I felt I was too old to take the course." "Because my family did not encourage participation" received a low item mean score of 1.03 and was not a deterrent for most of the subjects in the study.

"Lack of course relevance" was the fourth highest ranked deterrent factor. Table X reveals that the average item mean for the factor was 1.60 with a standard deviation of 0.72. The highest ranked variable in this factor was "because I didn't know about courses available for adults."

There were two deterrent factors which tied for the lowest ranked factors. "Cost" was one of those factors. Table XI shows that the average item mean for this factor was 1.48 with a standard deviation of 0.88. The highest ranked variable in this factor was "because I couldn't afford the registration or course fees." "Because my employer would not provide financial assistance or

TABLE VIII

"TIME CONSTRAINTS" DETERRENENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATIONAL
ACTIVITIES BY ITEM MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND DPS-G RANK

Variables	Item Mean	Standard Deviation	DPS-G Rank
Because the course was offered at an incon- venient location	2.54	1.83	4
Because the course was scheduled at an inconvenient time	1.95	1.59	9
Because of the amount of time required to finished the course	1.61	1.37	14
Because I didn't have the time for the studying required	1.54	1.28	18.5
Because I didn't think I could attend regularly	1.29	0.94	26

TABLE IX

**"LACK OF CONFIDENCE" DETERRENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN
ADULT EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES BY ITEM MEAN,
STANDARD DEVIATION AND DPS-G RANK**

Variables	Item Mean	Standard Deviation	DPS-G Rank
Because I felt I was too old to take the course	2.59	1.82	2
Because I felt I couldn't compete with younger students	2.09	1.66	6
Because I was not confident of my learning ability	1.64	1.39	12
Because I didn't meet the requirements for the course	1.59	1.34	16.5
Because I didn't think I would be able to finish the course	1.54	1.28	18.5
Because I felt unprepared for the course	1.51	1.21	21.5
Because my friends did not encourage my participation	1.11	0.64	30
Because my family did not encourage participation	1.03	0.16	33.5

TABLE X

"LACK OF COURSE RELEVANCE" DETERRENENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES BY ITEM MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION
AND DPS-G RANK

Variables	Item Mean	Standard Deviation	DPS-G Rank
Because I didn't know about courses avail- able for adults	2.33	1.76	5
Because the courses available did not seem interesting	2.08	1.64	7
Because the available courses did not seem useful or practical	1.51	1.25	21.5
Because I didn't think the course would meet my needs	1.51	1.25	21.5
Because the course was not on the right level for me	1.30	1.00	24.5
Because I wanted to learn something specific, but the course was too general	1.25	0.88	27
Because the courses avail- able were of poor quality	1.21	0.76	29

TABLE XI

"COST" DETERRENENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES
BY ITEM MEAN, STANDARD DEVIATION AND DPS-G RANK

Variables	Item Mean	Standard Deviation	DPS-G Rank
Because I couldn't afford the registration or course fees	1.79	1.46	11
Because I couldn't afford miscellaneous expenses like travel, books, etc.	1.63	1.34	13
Because my employer would not provide financial assistance or reimbursement	1.03	0.16	33.5

reimbursement" received a low item mean score of 1.03. This variable was not a deterrent for most of the subjects in the study.

"Low personal priority" was the other lowest ranked deterrent factor. Table XII indicates that the average item mean for this factor was 1.48 with a standard deviation of 0.75. The highest ranked variable in this factor was "because I didn't enjoy studying." There were low item mean scores for both of the lowest ranked factors.

The most often cited deterrent to participation was "because of transportation problems." It received an item mean score of 2.70. The second most frequently cited deterrent was "because I felt I was too old to take the course." It received an item mean score of 2.59.

"Personal problems" was the highest ranked deterrent factor. The average item mean for the factor was 1.91 with a standard deviation of 0.85.

Correlations Between Deterrent Factors and Demographic Variables

The Spearman Rank Order Correlation was utilized in order to determine whether there was a relationship between deterrent factors and demographic variables (Anderson-Bell Corporation, 1989). There was a correlation if the numbers were either more than +0.20 or less than -0.20. The demographic variables considered in the correlation were gender, age, education, and income. Table XIII reflects the Spearman Rank Order Correlation.

Women identified the factor "personal problems" as a deterrent more frequently than did men. The adults aged 66 and older

TABLE XII

"LOW PERSONAL PRIORITY" DETERRENENTS TO PARTICIPATION IN ADULT
EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES BY ITEM MEAN, STANDARD
DEVIATION AND DPS-G RANK

Variables	Item Mean	Standard Deviation	DPS-G Rank
Because I'm not that interested in taking courses	1.81	1.54	10
Because I didn't enjoy studying	1.60	1.40	15
Because I wasn't willing to give up my leisure time	1.59	1.37	16.5
Because I prefer to learn on my own	1.53	1.27	20
Because participation would take away from time with my family	1.30	1.00	24.5
Because education would not help me in my job	1.05	0.35	31.5

TABLE XIII
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DETERRENT FACTORS AND DEMGRAPHIC
VARIABLES (SPEARMAN)

Variables	Problems	Time	Confidence	Relevance	Cost	Priority
Gender	-0.19	-0.11	0.00	0.07	-0.08	-0.09
Age	-0.30	0.09	0.39	0.02	0.10	-0.01
Education	0.30	0.12	-0.42	-0.03	-0.30	0.21
Income	-0.31	-0.04	-0.37	-0.10	-0.34	0.07

identified this factor as a deterrent more frequently than did adults aged 65 and younger. There was a tendency for those with higher educational levels to identify "personal problems" as a deterrent more frequently than did the subjects with lower educational levels. Subjects with lower income levels identified this factor more frequently than did subjects with higher income levels.

There were no correlations between the deterrent factors "time constraints" and "lack of course relevance" and the demographic variables.

There was a correlation between "lack of confidence" and adults aged 66 and older. There were tendencies for those with lower educational levels and lower income levels to identify deterrents within this factor.

There were correlations between "cost" and both lower levels of education and lower income levels.

There was a correlation between "low personal priority" and higher levels of education.

The Mann-Whitney U Test was utilized to determine whether there was a correlation between gender and deterrent factors (Anderson-Bell Corporation, 1989). There was relationship if the probability was less than .05.

Table XIV indicates that the deterrent factor "personal problems" correlated with gender. The correlation was 0.05. Females tended to identify this factor as a deterrent to participation more frequently than did men.

The Kruskal Wallis One-Way Analysis of Variance by Ranks was utilized to determine whether correlations existed between age,

TABLE XIV
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DETERRENT FACTORS AND GENDER

Factors	Female		Male		Probability
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Problems	10.13	4.44	8.39	3.65	0.05
Time	9.21	4.39	8.39	4.56	0.18
Confidence	13.40	7.27	12.50	5.13	0.49
Relevance	10.94	4.84	11.64	5.42	0.27
Cost	4.62	2.84	4.11	2.28	0.27
Priority	0.69	4.23	9.21	4.99	0.47

education, income, and deterrent factors (Anderson-Bell Corporation, 1989).

Table XV reveals that age correlated with the deterrent factor "lack of confidence." The majority of adults aged 66 and older identified "lack of confidence" a deterrent to participation.

Table XVI indicates that there was a correlation between "lower levels of education" and the deterrent factors "personal problems" and "lack of confidence." The majority of subjects with lower levels of education indicated that "personal problems" was a deterrent to participation. "Lack of confidence" was also a deterrent to participation for the majority of subjects with lower levels of education.

Table XVII reveals that there was a correlation between lower income levels and the deterrent factors "personal problems," "lack of confidence," and "cost."

There were no correlations between the deterrent factors "time constraints," "lack of course relevance," "low personal priority," and the demographic variables.

TABLE XV
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DETERRENT FACTORS AND AGE

Factors	<u>65 and Under</u>		<u>66 and Over</u>		Probability
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Problems	7.70	3.27	9.79	4.32	0.14
Time	11.50	7.35	8.56	3.79	0.33
Confidence	8.30	0.95	13.77	6.76	0.00
Relevance	9.60	3.17	11.41	5.21	0.38
Cost	3.30	0.95	4.60	2.78	0.22
Priority	9.70	4.42	8.76	4.52	0.49

TABLE XVI
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DETERRENT FACTORS AND EDUCATION

Factors	<u>No Credential</u>		<u>High School Diploma</u>		<u>Degree</u>		Probability
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Problems	11.64	4.45	8.69	3.97	8.39	3.64	0.02
Time	7.80	3.33	9.09	3.93	9.91	5.86	0.44
Confidence	17.48	7.83	11.59	5.46	10.39	3.74	0.00
Relevance	10.32	2.75	11.88	6.03	11.17	5.44	0.90
Cost	5.80	3.52	4.09	2.28	3.43	1.04	0.08
Priority	7.56	3.36	9.38	5.14	9.61	4.47	0.25

TABLE XVII
CORRELATIONS BETWEEN DETERRENTS FACTORS AND INCOME

Categories	<u>\$14,999 (-)</u>		<u>\$15,000-\$29,999</u>		<u>\$30,000 +</u>		Probability
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	
Problems	10.49	4.52	8.23	3.31	6.57	1.99	0.03
Time	8.90	4.04	9.00	5.52	8.86	4.10	0.89
Confidence	14.67	6.89	10.82	5.61	8.71	1.50	0.01
Relevance	11.57	5.36	10.55	4.39	10.43	4.72	0.70
Cost	5.14	3.08	3.23	0.75	3.14	0.38	0.04
Priority	8.71	4.49	9.18	4.89	9.14	3.63	0.82

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors deterring adults aged 55 and older from participating in adult educational activities. Surveys were conducted on December 13, 1991 and on December 19, 1991 at two senior citizen centers in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The participation rate was 62 percent. Sixty-five percent of the respondents were female. The average age of the respondents was 74.8. Forty-one percent of the respondents had earned high school diplomas. Sixty-five percent of the respondents had an income of \$15,000 or less.

The Deterrents to Participation Scale General (DPS-G) indicated that transportation problems were the most often cited deterrents to participation in adult educational activities. Other deterrents such as "I felt I was too old to take the course" and "personal health problems or handicaps" were identified frequently by subjects as reasons for nonparticipation. "Personal problems" were cited as the highest ranked deterrent factor.

Correlations between the deterrent factors and demographic information were similar for Spearman, Kruskal Wallis and Mann-Whitney analyses. The deterrent factor "personal problems"

correlated with those aged 66 and older, lower levels of income and education. There were no correlations between the deterrent factors "time constraints" and "lack of course relevance." The deterrent factor "lack of confidence" correlated with adults aged 66 and older, lower levels of income and education. The deterrent factor "cost" correlated with lower income levels.

In the Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) study "time constraints" was the highest ranked deterrent factor. By contrast, "personal problems" was the highest ranked deterrent factor in the present study. The adults in the Darkenwald and Valentine study were young adults and military personnel. Younger adults and those employed full-time had more problems with time. By contrast, adults aged 55 and older were retired and did not have as many problems with time in the present study. Most of the adults in the present study were active in adult educational activities. There were no correlations between "time constraints," "lack of course relevance," and the demographic variables in either the Darkenwald and Valentine 1985 study or in the present study.

Conclusions

The study presents the following conclusions:

1. Deterrents to participation in adult educational activities are complex and vary among individuals.
2. Transportation is a problem for adults aged 55 and older due to limitations of health, unsafe driving areas, distance of course locations, and lack of transportation.

3. Cost and lack of confidence were deterrents to participation for persons with lower levels of income or education.

Recommendations for Practice

The following recommendations for practice are offered.

1. Transportation should be provided when the courses are offered. Car pools, bus schedule arrangement, assistance in utilizing the city transportation system and the offering of courses on television could help alleviate some of the transportation problems.

2. Programs should be marketed to adults aged 55 and older. Several of the respondents had not received information about the courses offered. Many adults aged 55 and older go to church, to the doctor's office, and to the grocery store, and watch television. These are the fora in which to market their programs.

3. Programs should be planned together with the clients. Input from the adults aged 55 and older would increase the responsiveness of programs to their needs.

4. Costs need to be waived or discounted for older adults as a majority of older adults live on fixed incomes.

Recommendations for Research

The following recommendations for further research are offered.

A shorter questionnaire needs to be designed for older adults. The respondents to this questionnaire complained about the length.

The respondents complained about the Likert Scale. "Yes" or "No" questions should be asked.

A questionnaire needs to be designed specifically for the older adult population. Their needs and interests are different from those of the general adult population.

The study should be replicated with a larger population in order to enable the generalization of the study to a broader older adult population.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

ADULT LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE

ADULT LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING FOUR QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF,
REMEMBER THAT YOUR ANSWERS ARE COMPLETELY CONFIDENTIAL.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. WHAT IS YOUR SEX? | 1. FEMALE
2. MALE |
| 2. WHAT IS YOUR AGE? | _____ YEARS |
| 3. WHAT IS YOUR HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL CREDENTIAL?
(CIRCLE ONE) | 1. NO CREDENTIAL
2. HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA
3. ASSOCIATE DEGREE
4. BACHELOR'S DEGREE
5. GRADUATE DEGREE |
| 4. WHAT IS YOUR APPROXIMATE TOTAL FAMILY INCOME BEFORE TAXES? (CIRCLE ONE). | 1. LESS THAN \$15,000
2. \$15,000 TO \$29,999
3. \$30,000 TO \$44,999
4. \$45,000 OR MORE. |

I SINCERELY THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN THIS PROJECT.

ADULT LEARNING QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Every year, more and more adults participate in some kind of educational activity. Examples include courses, workshops, seminars, and training programs offered by schools, colleges, and other organizations or community groups. However, adults sometimes find it hard to participate in these activities, even when they want to. Try to think of something -- anything at all -- that you wanted to learn in the past year or two, but never did. Then look at the reasons below and decide how important each one was in your decision not to participate in an educational activity. (Please note: in the questions below, the word "course" refers to any type of educational activity, including courses, workshops, seminars, etc.)

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE NUMBER FOR EACH REASON. IF A REASON DOES NOT APPLY TO YOU CIRCLE NUMBER 1.

HOW IMPORTANT WAS EACH REASON IN YOUR DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE?

REASONS	NOT IMP.	SLIGHTLY IMP.	SOMEWHAT IMP.	QUITE IMP.	VERY IMP.
1. BECAUSE I FELT I COULDN'T COMPETE WITH YOUNGER STUDENTS	1	2	3	4	5
2. BECAUSE I DON'T ENJOY STUDYING	1	2	3	4	5
3. BECAUSE OF A PERSONAL HEALTH PROBLEM OR HANDICAP	1	2	3	4	5
4. BECAUSE I DIDN'T THINK I WOULD BE ABLE TO FINISH THE COURSE	1	2	3	4	5
5. BECAUSE I DIDN'T HAVE TIME FOR THE STUDYING REQUIRED	1	2	3	4	5

**HOW IMPORTANT WAS EACH REASON
IN YOUR DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE?**

REASONS	NOT IMP.	SLIGHTLY IMP.	SOMEWHAT IMP.	QUITE IMP.	VERY IMP.
6. BECAUSE I WANTED TO LEARN SOMETHING SPECIFIC, BUT THE COURSE WAS TOO GENERAL	1	2	3	4	5
7. BECAUSE I DIDN'T MEET THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE COURSE	1	2	3	4	5
8. BECAUSE THE COURSES AVAILABLE DID NOT SEEM INTERESTING	1	2	3	4	5
9. BECAUSE THE COURSE WAS OFFERED AT AN INCONVENIENT LOCATION	1	2	3	4	5
10. BECAUSE I COULDN'T AFFORD THE REGISTRATION OR COURSE FEES	1	2	3	4	5
11. BECAUSE I FELT I WAS TOO OLD TO TAKE THE COURSE ..	1	2	3	4	5
12. BECAUSE I DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT COURSES AVAILABLE FOR ADULTS	1	2	3	4	5
13. BECAUSE OF THE AMOUNT OF TIME REQUIRED TO FINISH THE COURSE	1	2	3	4	5
14. BECAUSE THE COURSE WAS SCHEDULED AT AN INCONVENIENT TIME ...	1	2	3	4	5
15. BECAUSE MY FAMILY DID NOT ENCOURAGE PARTICIPATION	1	2	3	4	5
16. BECAUSE OF TRANSPORTATION PROBLEMS	1	2	3	4	5

HOW IMPORTANT WAS EACH REASON
IN YOUR DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE?

REASONS	NOT IMP.	SLIGHTLY IMP.	SOMEWHAT IMP.	QUITE IMP.	VERY IMP.
17. BECAUSE THE COURSES AVAILABLE WERE OF POOR QUALITY	1	2	3	4	5
18. BECAUSE I WAS NOT CONFIDENT OF MY LEARNING ABILITY	1	2	3	4	5
19. BECAUSE OF FAMILY PROBLEMS	1	2	3	4	5
20. BECAUSE I'M NOT THAT INTERESTED IN TAKING COURSES	1	2	3	4	5
21. BECAUSE PARTICIPATION WOULD TAKE AWAY FROM TIME WITH MY FAMILY	1	2	3	4	5
22. BECAUSE I HAD TROUBLE ARRANGING FOR CHILD CARE	1	2	3	4	5
23. BECAUSE THE AVAILABLE COURSES DID NOT SEEM USEFUL OR PRACTICAL	1	2	3	4	5
24. BECAUSE I WASN'T WILLING TO GIVE UP MY LEISURE TIME	1	2	3	4	5
25. BECAUSE THE COURSE WAS OFFERED IN AN UNSAFE AREA	1	2	3	4	5
26. BECAUSE EDUCATION WOULD NOT HELP ME IN MY JOB ..	1	2	3	4	5
27. BECAUSE I FELT UNPREPARED FOR THE COURSE	1	2	3	4	5

**HOW IMPORTANT WAS EACH REASON
IN YOUR DECISION NOT TO PARTICIPATE?**

REASONS	NOT IMP.	SLIGHTLY IMP.	SOMEWHAT IMP.	QUITE IMP.	VERY IMP.
28. BECAUSE I COULDN'T AFFORD MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSES LIKE TRAVEL, BOOKS, ETC.	1	2	3	4	5
29. BECAUSE THE COURSE WAS NOT ON THE RIGHT LEVEL FOR ME	1	2	3	4	5
30. BECAUSE I DIDN'T THINK I COULD ATTEND REGULARLY	1	2	3	4	5
31. BECAUSE MY EMPLOYER WOULD NOT PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE OR REIMBURSEMENT	1	2	3	4	5
32. BECAUSE I DIDN'T THINK THE COURSE WOULD MEET MY NEEDS	1	2	3	4	5
33. BECAUSE I PREFER TO LEARN ON MY OWN	1	2	3	4	5
34. BECAUSE MY FRIENDS DID NOT ENCOURAGE MY PARTICIPATION	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO CARROL THOMPSON

1825 N. Xenophon
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127

January 3, 1992

Carrol Thompson
Southminster Senior Citizen Center
3500 S. Peoria
Tulsa, OK 74105

Dear Carrol:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing me to conduct my research project at Southminster Senior Citizen Center.

The people were so warm and friendly. I enjoyed talking with the seniors at the center. They were very interesting. Thank you for the wonderful lunch.

You were so helpful and pleasant. Once again, Thank You.

Sincerely,

Tonya Cox

TC/rm

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO CHARLOTTE CHAVEZ

1825 N. Xenophon
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74127

January 3, 1992

Charlotte Chavez
Eastside Senior Citizen Center
1427 S. Indinapolis
Tulsa, OK 74105

Dear Charlotte:

I would like to express my appreciation for giving me the opportunity to conduct the research at Eastside Senior Citizen Center. I truly enjoyed talking with the people at the center.

Once again, Thank You.

Sincerely,

Tonya Cox

TC/rm

VITA 

Tonya H. Cox

Candidate for the degree of
Master of Science

Thesis: FACTORS WHICH DETER ADULTS AGED 55 AND OLDER FROM
PARTICIPATING IN ADULT EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Tulsa, Oklahoma, July 29, 1962,
the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. James E. Helker; the wife of
Steven M. Cox; son, Jaeger David Cox.

Education: Graduated from Central High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma,
in May, 1980; received Bachelor of Science degree from
Oklahoma State University in 1984; completed requirements
for the Master of Science degree at Oklahoma State
University in May, 1992.

Professional Experience: Recreational Therapist, Saint Francis
Hospital, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1985-1988; Supervisor,
Recreational Therapy Department, Saint Francis Hospital,
Tulsa, Oklahoma, 1989 to present.