CAREER AND PERSONAL SATISFACTION OF WOMEN PARTICIPANTS IN FEDERALLY-FUNDED PROGRAMS IN OKLAHOMA

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background

Federal funds have supported secondary and post-secondary vocational education since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. The 1976 Amendments to the Vocational Education Act of 1963 were the first amendments to require that each state take positive steps towards overcoming sex bias and stereotyping and eliminating sex discrimination from federally funded vocational education programs. A new law, the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Act, was signed in October, 1984, to replace the Vocational Act of 1963. This new law contained the largest designation of funds to ever be allocated for the training and re-training of female students (Voc-Tech Equity News & Notes, 1986).

In the State of Oklahoma, the State Vocational-Technical Education system offers two programs to meet the training and counseling needs of female students. The programs included four Educational Equity and 26 Single Parents/Homemakers Programs. In higher education institutions in Oklahoma, there are eleven federally funded Student Support Services Programs which provide academic and personal counseling to special populations of students including adult women who need career information and retention assistance.

The percentage of women in the labor force of the United States has risen from 18 percent in 1900 to 29 percent in 1950 to 44 percent

in 1986 ("Women in the Labor Force", 1987). Table I illustrates the labor force participation rates of women, by age, from the year 1980 until 1986. The number of women who work outside their homes has increased significantly over the years as large numbers of women have been forced to seek employment to support themselves and their children following the loss of their sources of income after becoming divorced, widowed, or disqualified for welfare payments.

In the process of developing and operating employment training programs for women, public opinions related to the social acceptance of working women must be considered. Social attitudes towards divorce, welfare, motherhood and single parent families are all factors in the formation of public opinions regarding working women. Before 1950, the word "divorce" was rarely spoken as the occurrence of divorce was rare and caused embarrassment. In the 1950's, women primarily stayed home and were full-time mothers and housewives although women had become very involved in working in factories during World War II. Smut (1959) in his book, Women and Work in America, examined attitudes towards working women. He admitted that measuring these attitudes was difficult as two subjects in America related to the issue of working women were quite sensitive. These identified subjects were: the importance of working and the relationships between men and women.

Consequently, the topic of working women has continued to be a topic of debate since the 1950's. However, in today's society, the debate centers on child care issues, sexism and salary differences between men and women. Negative feelings about women who work have lessened as larger numbers of women have been forced into the world of

TABLE I

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION PERCENTAGE RATES
OF WOMEN, BY AGE, 1980-1986

Year	Women 20-64			All Women	
	All	White	Black and Other	20-24	25-34
1890.	17.4	14.9	38.4	30.2	16.8
1900.	19.3	16.5	41.0	31.7	19.4
1920.	22.9	20.7	43.1	37.5	23.7
1930.	25.4	23.3	44.1	41.8	27.1
1940.	29.4	27.9	42.9	45.6	33.3
1950.	33.3	32.2	43.2	43.6	32.0
1960.	42.3	40.9	54.0	46.1	36.0
1970.	50.0	49.1	57.2	57.7	45.0
1980.	60.8	60.5	62.8	68.9	65.5
1986.	66.4	66.3	66.4	72.4	71.6

Source: "Women In the Labor Force." Excerpt from the 1987 Report of United States of Economic Advisors. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1987.

work outside their homes. One primary factor in this increase of women who work has been the increased number of divorces in the last 20 years. Following a divorce, many women must seek work to support themselves as the income available to them decreases by 71 percent following a divorce (Bagwell, 1986).

The majority of women seeking employment today also have children whom they must support. Table II shows the labor force participation rates of women by age of the youngest child from the years 1970, 1975, 1980 and 1986. Financial support for their children has forced many women to attempt to enter the job market only to find that their lack of marketable skills prevents them from finding employment.

Special programs to prepare these women to enter the current competitive job market have been funded through federal acts and appropriations. Due to pressure from the governmental equal opportunity employment acts and from society to provide equal treatment to both sexes, participants in these special programs have been encouraged to pursue non-traditional female careers. The basis for this pursuit has been equal opportunity, the possibility of higher wages, and more available jobs. The utilization of services provided by these special programs has been documented in annual reports; however, a measure of the clients' satisfaction with the services and training has not been completed.

Statement of the Problem

The problem addressed in this study was despite the continued focus from federal funding sources to develop special counseling and training programs which prepare women to enter traditional and non-

TABLE II

LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION PERCENTAGE RATES OF WOMEN BY AGE OF YOUNGEST CHILD, MARCH OF SELECTED YEARS, 1970-1986

	Wives Husbands Present				Women Alone
Presence and Age of child	1970	1975	1980	1986	1986
Total	40.8	44.5	50.2	54.6	62.1
With Children Under 18 years. . .	39.8	44.9	54.3	61.4	69.5
Under 6 years . . .	30.3	36.8	45.3	53.9	57.9
Under 3 years . . .	25.8	32.6	41.5	51.0	50.9
1 year & under. . .	24.0	30.8	39.0	49.8	44.7
3-5 years	36.9	42.2	51.7	58.5	64.5
6-17 years.	49.2	52.4	62.0	68.5	76.8
6-13 years.	47.0	51.8	62.6	68.0	74.5

Source: "Women in the Labor Force." Excerpt from 1987 Report of the United States Council of Economic Advisors. Washington DC: Government Printing Office.

traditional female careers, there has been no determination whether these programs are meeting the personal and career needs of single parents and displaced homemakers.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research was to determine the equivalent levels of personal and career satisfaction of women trained in federally funded programs for non-traditional and traditional female careers.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

1. To define the characteristics of the special populations of single parents and displaced homemakers and to identify their personal and employment needs.

2. To identify special programs designed to meet the personal and career needs of single parents and displaced homemakers.

3. To determine the program satisfaction of women participating in federally funded special programs.

4. To compare the career satisfaction of women trained in traditional female careers and of women trained in non-traditional female careers.

5. To determine the equivalent levels of personal and career satisfaction from the programs and subsequent employment.

Assumptions of the Study

The assumptions of the study were:

1. The women involved in this study are all single parents and/or displaced homemakers who are highly motivated to achieve in their careers because they are totally responsible for their own financial security.

2. The single parents/homemakers programs at 26 Oklahoma Vocational-Technical schools and four Educational Equity Programs are administered basically the same.

3. Services offered to students through the eleven Student Support Services Programs in Oklahoma are the same.

4. Employment for women in non-traditional female careers is available in Oklahoma.

5. All responses from participants in special programs will be honest and representative of their personal attitudes.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study were:

1. Former participants of programs serving special populations and offering training in traditional and non-traditional female careers were difficult to locate.

2. No attempt was made to differentiate between participants and completers in the career training programs.

3. The measurement of personal satisfaction was affected by the personal attitudes of the participants, program staff members and instructors. Personality conflicts which affect acceptance and receptiveness attitudes to training and counseling cannot be controlled.

4. The teaching styles of various instructors on different campuses presenting different skills affected the overall feelings of acceptance and satisfaction by the participants.

Definitions of Terms

Definitions used in this study were:

Displaced homemaker: A woman whose principal job has been homemaking and who has lost her main source of income because of divorce, separation, widowhood, disability or long-term unemployment of a spouse, or loss of eligibility for public assistance. If she is employed at all, she works part-time or for part of a year.

Single parent: A person with minor children who is living without a spouse. Single parents may be living in their own households or with relatives.

Traditional female careers: Work positions which have traditionally been held by women. For example: secretaries, nurses, teachers, social workers, cooks, housekeepers and sales clerks.

Non-traditional female careers: Work positions which have traditionally been held by men. For example: truck drivers, mechanics, appliance repairmen, business managers, horticultural assistants and electronic technicians.

Personal satisfaction: For the purpose of this study, personal satisfaction is measured by feelings of self-worth, pleasant feelings of self-acceptance, and feelings of contentment with surrounding environment and with others.

Career satisfaction: For the purposes of this study, career satisfaction is measured by feelings of accomplishment, qualification, contentment, and belonging while involved in a specific job.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study included:

1. Three Single Parents/Homemakers Programs, two Education Equity Programs and one Student Support Services Program.

2. Questionnaires mailed to 60 participants (Single Parents Homemakers Programs), 40 participants (Education Equity Programs), and 20 participants (Student Support Services).

3. Interviews with coordinators from each type of special program and phone interviews with state coordinators from each type.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

Special populations are often identified and named by the federal government in order to award federal funding to meet the specific needs of special groups of people. Over the last 15 years, federal funding has been granted to educational and social services agencies to assist single parents and displaced homemakers in their goal of becoming self-sufficient. This chapter provides a description of the women in these special populations, their specific needs and the services which have been funded to meet their needs. It also provides an overview of non-traditional and traditional female careers and explores the factors which reveal the satisfaction levels of these women in their new roles.

Demographics of Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents

In July, 1987, the Displaced Homemakers Network in Washington, D.C., completed A Status Report On Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States, which identified 14 million displaced homemakers and single parents in the United States. Although these two special population groups are different by definition, the people who comprise these individual groups share many of the same problems.

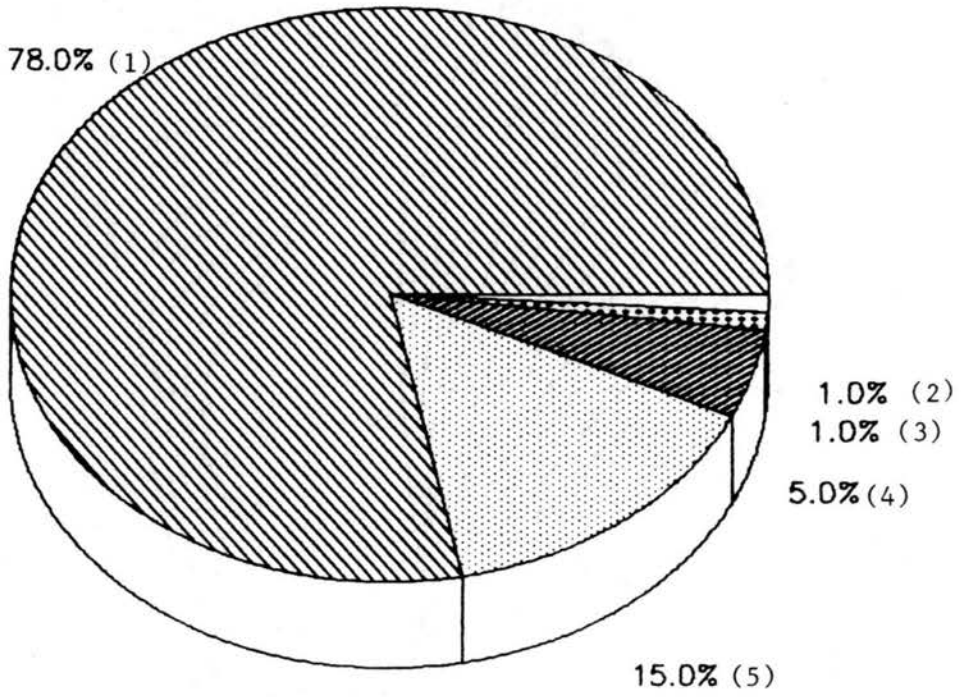
The most critical similar characteristic of these two groups is their inability to obtain adequate employment to meet their income needs. Unfortunately, these groups also share a deficiency of job skills. A Status Report (1987) defines these populations as follows:

> A displaced homemaker is a woman whose principal job has been homemaking and who has lost her main source of income because of divorce, separation, widowhood, disability or long-term unemployment of a spouse, or loss of eligibility for public assistance.
>
> A single parent is a person with minor children who is living without a spouse. Single parents may be living in their own households or with relatives. Single parents differ from displaced homemakers in that the single parent may never have been married. Unlike displaced homemakers—who by definition work part-time, seasonally, or not at all; single parents may be working on a full-time basis (p. 2).

Figures 1-8 illustrate the characteristics of displaced homemakers and single parents—their ethnic groups, their ages, their educational levels, and their employability. The most common characteristic is that these groups have incomes below the lower living standard as defined by the United States Department of Labor. Displaced homemakers are more than three times as likely as single parents to be living below the absolute poverty level (A Status Report, 1987).

As shown in Figure 1, the 1980 Census reported 11,430,964 displaced homemakers in the United States. Approximately 78.2 percent were White, 15.7 percent Black, 4.7 percent Hispanic, one percent Native American and one percent Asian (A Status Report, 1987).

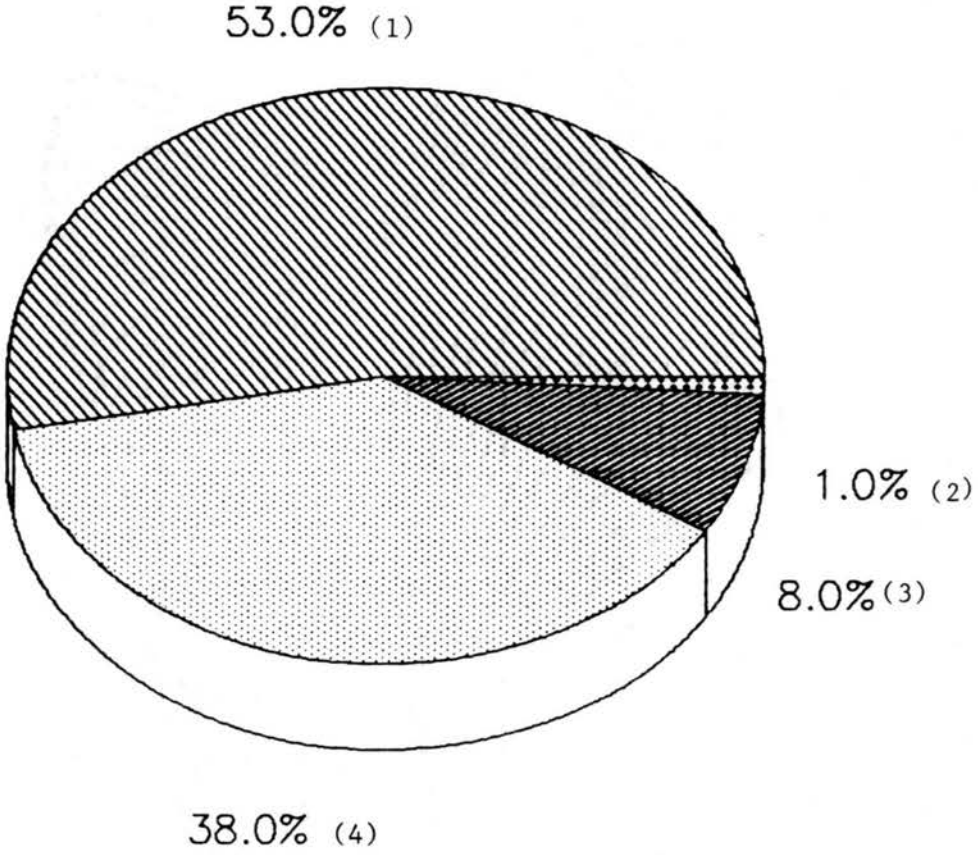
Figure 2 represents the 3,223,217 single parents in the United States who were not displaced homemakers as reported in the 1980 Census. These single parents comprised 22 percent of the total



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

Figure 1. Who are the Displaced Homemakers in the United States by Ethnic Groups?

1 = White
2 = Native American
3 = Asian
4 = Hispanic
5 = Black



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

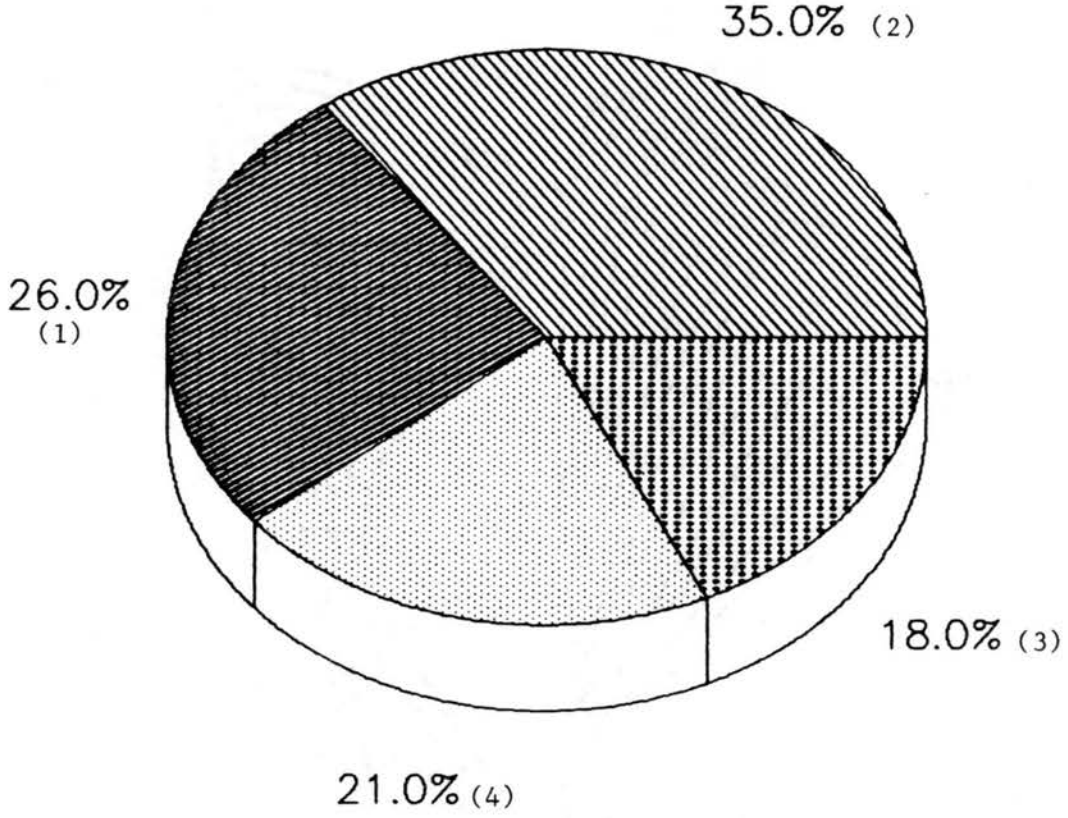
Figure 2. Who are the Single Parents in the United States by Ethnic Groups?

1 = White
2 = Asian American
3 = Hispanic
4 = Black

population of displaced homemakers and single parents combined. Of the single parents, 52.5 percent were White, 37.5 percent were Black, 7.9 percent Hispanic, one percent were Asian-American, and a fraction were members of other minority groups (A Status Report, 1987).

Fifty-six percent of all displaced homemakers in the 1980 Census lacked a high school diploma; 22 percent of those between 25 and 65 years old had not completed eighth grade. Figures 3 and 4 represent the educational status of displaced homemakers and single parents respectively. White single parents had a considerable higher rate of high school completion (62 percent) than Blacks (39 percent), Hispanics (36 percent), or Native American (40 percent). Asian-American single parents, with a 58 percent completion rate, were the only minority group with a percentage of high school graduates close to that of the white single parents (A Status Report, 1987).

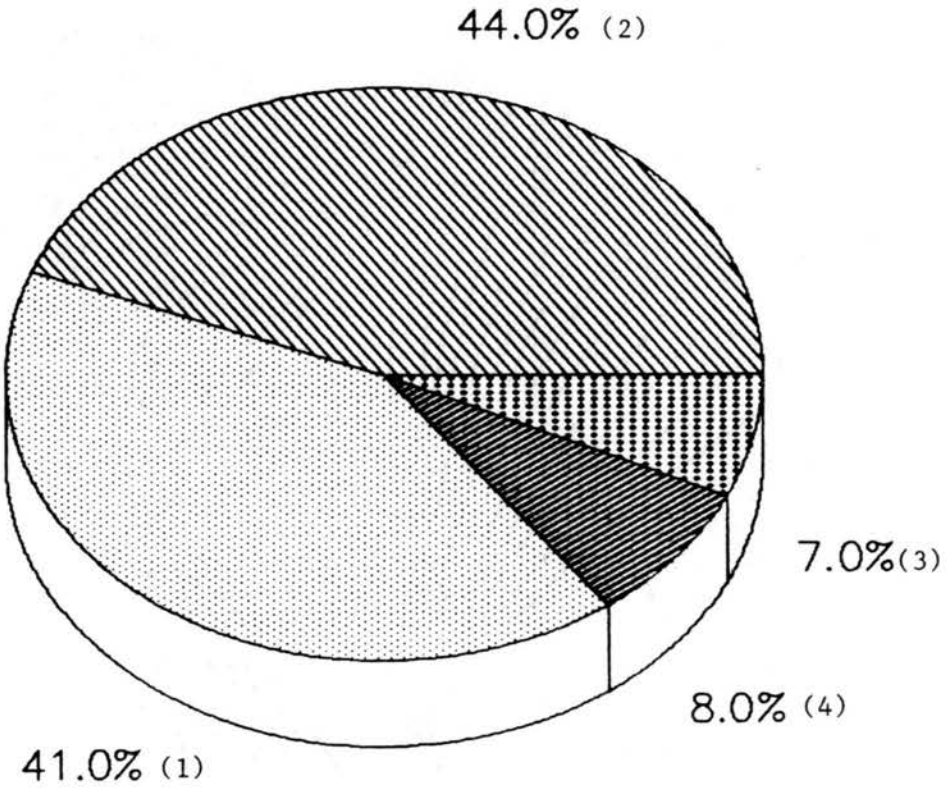
Figures 5 and 6 illustrate the employment status of displaced homemakers and single parents respectively. Thirty percent of displaced homemakers between 35 and 64 years old work part-time or seasonally; 66.2 percent were unemployed. Of the displaced homemakers who were working, 40 percent had children under 18 years old in their care. The percentage of displaced homemakers over 35 who were not employed increased with each age group. Over seven out of ten single parents were employed full-time. However, this high rate of full-time labor force participation was in part due to the fact that by definition the single parent population included women with children who had lost their primary source of income and who would be a part of the displaced homemaker populations except for the fact that they were working full-time. Twenty-one percent of the single parents did not



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

Figure 3. Years of Education Completed by Displaced Homemakers

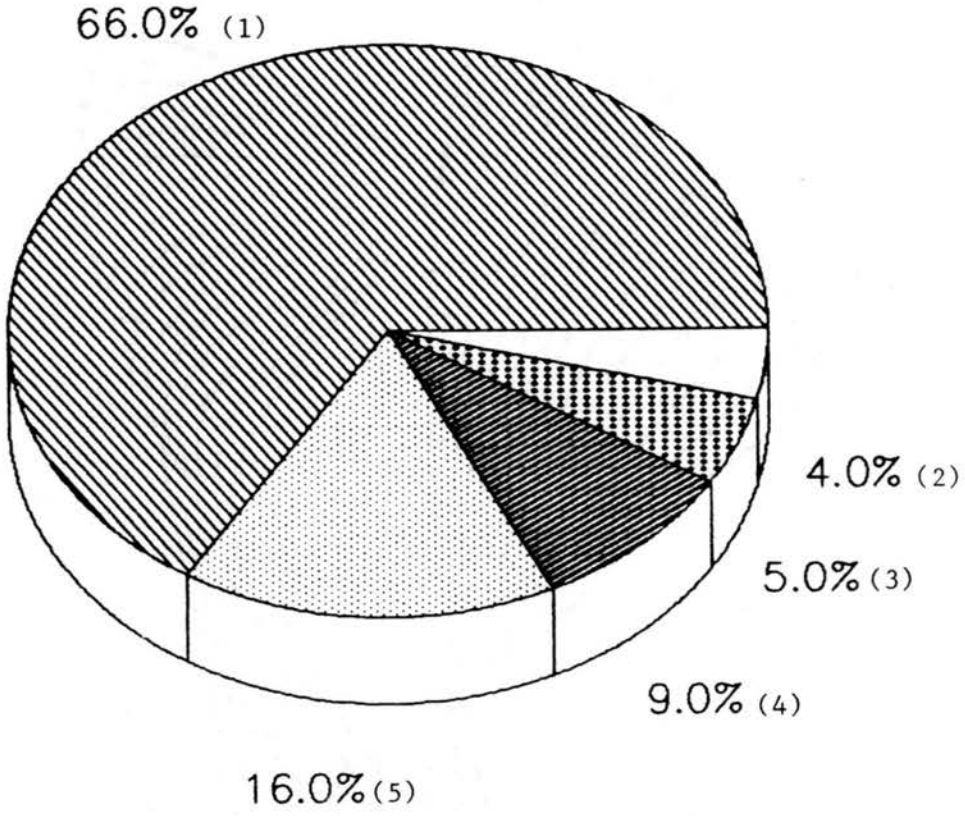
1 = High School Graduates
2 = 0 - 8 Years
3 = High School Plus
4 = 6 - 11 Years



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

Figure 4. Years of Education Completed by Single Parents

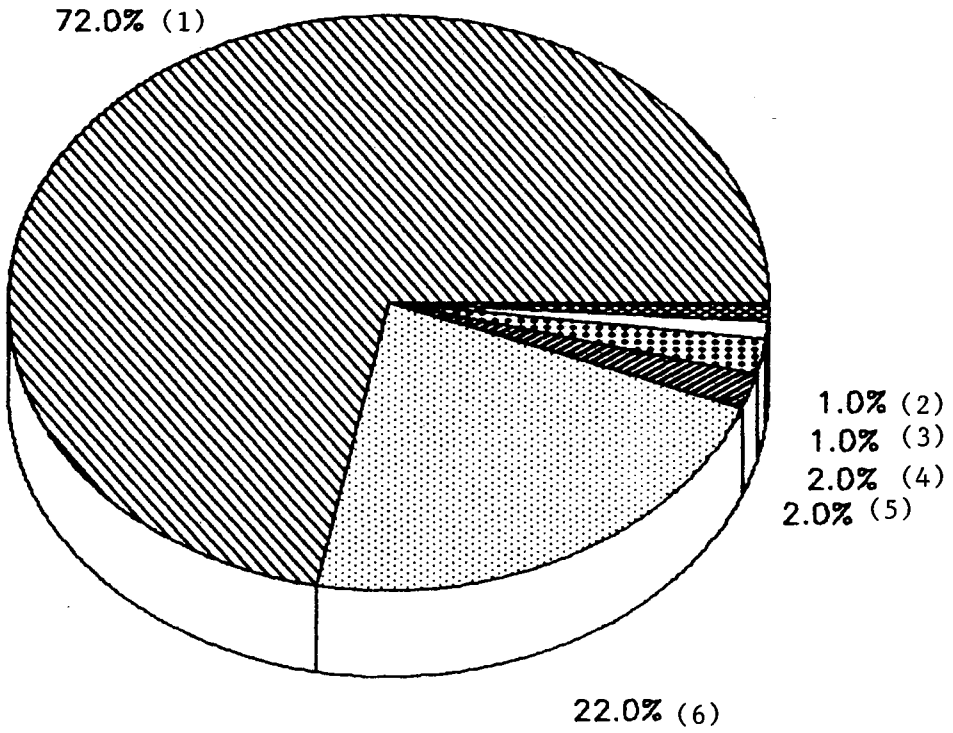
1 = 0 - 8 Years
2 = High School Plus
3 = High School Graduate
4 = 8 - 11 Years



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

Figure 5. Employment Status of Displaced Homemakers

1 = Not Employed
2 = Hours Not Reported
3 = 27 - 29 Weeks Part-Time
4 = 1 - 26 Weeks Part-Time
5 = 27 - 52 Weeks Part Time



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

Figure 6. Employment Status of Single Parents

1 = Employed Part-Time
2 = Hours Not Reported
3 = 27 - 39 Weeks
4 = 27 - 62 Weeks
5 = 1 - 26 Weeks
6 = Not Employed

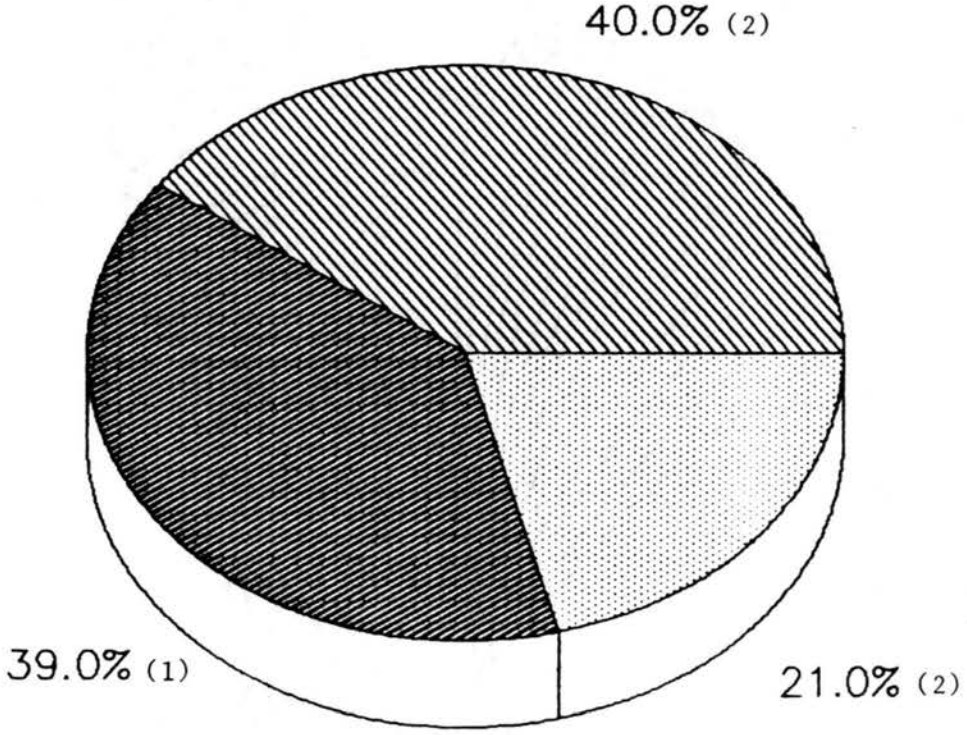
work; the remaining 8 percent worked part-time or seasonally or did not report their hours (A Status Report, 1987).

As of the 1980 Census, 40 percent (4,342,047) of all displaced homemakers over the age of 20 were living below the Department of Labor (DOL) poverty level and another 2,360,147 were above the poverty level but below the Bureau of Labor Statistics lower living standard. Thus, 61 percent of all displaced homemakers had insufficient incomes. More than three quarters of all single parents in the 1980 Census reported incomes below the level at which the DOL considers one can meet day to day expenses. Figures 7 and 8 represent the 1980 Census information on the economic status of displaced homemakers and single parents (A Status Report, 1987).

In the State of Oklahoma, there are 117,219 displaced homemakers (Miller, 1987). According to LeGrand (1988), State Coordinator of Single Parents/Homemakers Programs, 67 percent of these women are between the ages of 22-44. As the legal definition implies, these women have spent most of their adult lives in the home caring for their families. Single parents are predominately younger than 35 as the legal definitions for single parents and displaced homemakers place the older women in the displaced homemaker category.

Personal Counseling and Employment Needs of Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers

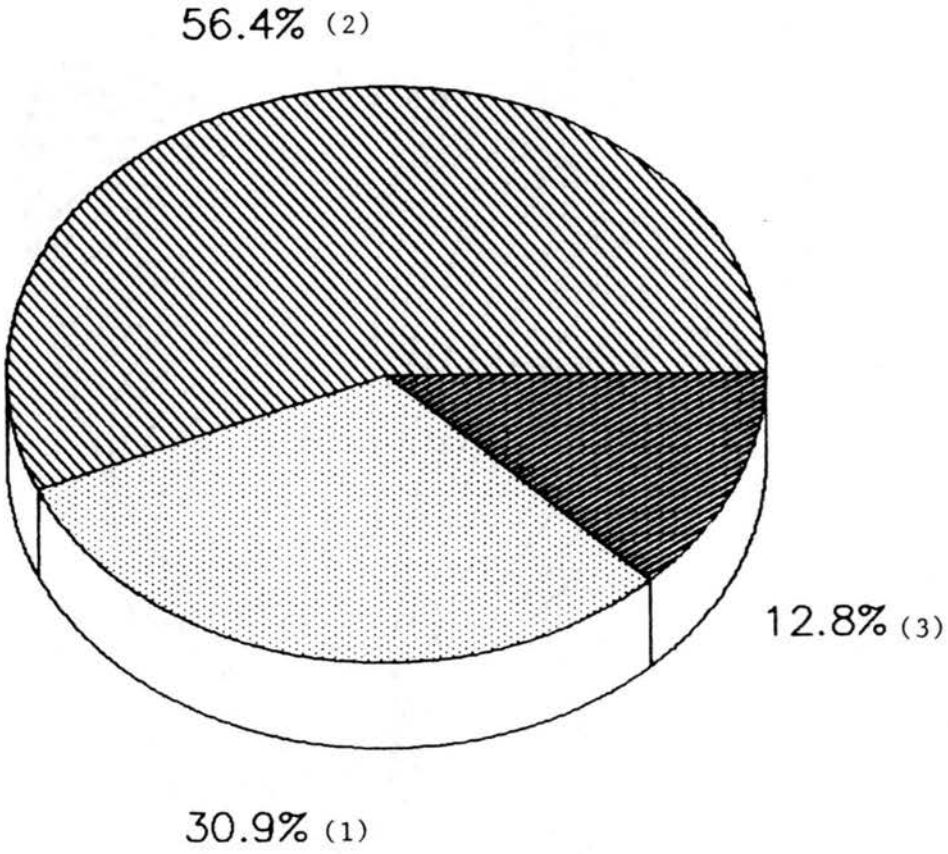
Women in the special population of single parents and displaced homemakers often experience regression in life stages as described by Erikson in 1950 (Swift, 1987). This regression is often demonstrated



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

Figure 7. Economic Status of Displaced Homemakers

1 = Above Lower-Living Standard
2 = Below Poverty Level
3 = Below Lower-Living Standard



Source: A Status Report on Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents in the United States. Washington, DC: Displaced Homemaker Network, 1987.

Figure 8. Economic Status of Single Parents

1 = Above Lower-Living Standard
2 = Below Lower-Living Standard
3 = Below Poverty Level

by the women's needs to build self-confidence and to receive life direction counseling and career guidance. Adults should progress from one life stage to another—not regress (Hultsch and Deutsch, 1981). The necessity to build self-confidence must be confronted as displaced homemakers feel isolated from society (Swift, 1987). They need assistance in becoming a part of an educational community and in learning how to relate to fellow students and potential employers. A support group is especially helpful for these women as they are able to share their frustrations, anger, and fear with others who have had similar experiences.

Thus, all members of the group can gain strength and emotional support. Because the highest percentage of displaced homemakers are displaced due to being divorced (A Status Report, 1987), a high number of women have to learn how to overcome their anger and often fear of men as they will probably have instructors and future employers who are men. As the displaced homemaker learns new skills and becomes more assured of her own abilities, she begins to relate to other people, including men, with confidence.

Along with the need for self confidence is the need to earn a living to support themselves and their children. Unfortunately, their lack of marketable skills prohibits them from finding jobs above minimum wage and often from finding full-time employment. In order to attend classes to gain new skills, they must receive information on how to apply for financial assistance. Their need for immediate income often forces them to enroll in Open Entry-Open Exit programs at a vocational-technical center in order to learn a marketable skill quickly (Griffith, 1988).

Through career guidance and testing with various instruments such as the Career Decision-Making System, Technical Aptitude Battery, and the General Aptitude Test Battery; vocational-technical program coordinators are able to assist the displaced homemaker in deciding what career to pursue (McElroy, 1987). If a homemaker begins with a short term course, she is encouraged to continue taking additional courses to increase her marketability.

Personal counseling to assist the homemaker in making the transition from home to the world of work is often necessary. Accepting her loss of her life as she has always known it is a difficult, often painful process for the homemaker. Single parents also need personal counseling to assist them in handling the total responsibility of their families. The realization that she is the one in charge of her life and her children is often difficult to accept for the single parent.

Swift, Colvin, and Mills (1987) developed a survey instrument to collect data from 166 centers for women located at colleges and universities in the United States. They compared their national data to a study of one center at the Women's Center at the University of Toledo. The needs of the displaced homemakers in the two studies are reported in Table III.

Services Available Through Special Programs

The needs of displaced homemakers and single parents can be summarized in terms of an overwhelming need to become socially and economically independent. To assist the women in these populations to become self-sufficient, special educational programs must be prepared

to deliver a battery of services. Single Parents and Displaced Homemakers Programs from Florida, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Mississippi and Illinois provide multiple services to meet the many needs of these special populations.

The services recommended by these programs were:

--Personal Counseling with these primary goals: Acceptance of herself and her responsibilities, the recognition of her ability to learn new skills and the development of a positive attitude (Bagwell, 1986; LeGrand, 1988).

--Life Skills Workshops: Confidence building, decision making, assertiveness training, money and time management, life planning, values assessment, and communication skills (Wilson, 1988; Abel & Albright, 1984).

--Financial Assistance: The programs funded by the Carl Perkins Act at Vocational-Technical Schools in Oklahoma pay child care expenses when possible while the mother is in classes, provide transportation funds (gas expenses or bus tokens), tuition, books, and supplies. Most women are eligible to receive federal PELL grants to help pay their tuition (Wilson, 1988).

--Career Skills Workshops: Self-assessment of skills, resume-writing, job search skills, interview techniques and career exploration (Bagwell, 1986).

--Referral Services: Referrals to community service agencies to meet immediate needs such as housing, financial assistance, medical care and legal aid (Towns, 1980).

--Skills Assessment: Formal and informal evaluations of skills and abilities. Basic math, language and reading skills are assessed

TABLE III

NEEDS EXPRESSED BY DISPLACED HOMEMAKERS

Need	National Study n	Rank	%	Center Study n	Rank	%
Improve Skills to get a job	1816	1	13	12	6	5
Career Guidance	1785	2	12	47	1	21
Build self-confidence	1732	3	12	10	9	5
Life direction counseling	1473	4	10	11	8	5
Full-time employment	1330	5	9	34	3	15
Return to school	1223	6	8	24	4	10
Retraining	1175	7	8	8	10	4
Financial assistance	1029	8	7	38	2	17
Schooling to get a job	972	9	7	17	5	8
Academic information	950	10	7	8	11	4
Networking	637	11	4	1	12	1
Career Change	443	12	3	11	7	5
Total needs expressed	15441			221		

Source: Swift, J. "Displaced Homemakers: Adults Returning to with Different Characteristics and Needs." Journal of Student Personnel, Vol. 29 (1987), pp. 343-350.

before placement in training programs. Referrals to developmental studies classes are made when appropriate (Wilson, 1988; McElroy, 1987).

--Training Programs: Following assessments and discussions with the single parents and homemakers, referrals are made to various training programs. Depending upon each woman's interests, needs and abilities; training programs are recommended (Wilson, 1988).

--On the job internships: Some programs offer the women an opportunity to observe a true-life work experience to help her in deciding if the job is one which she could accomplish and enjoy. This service is especially valuable to those women who are considering non-traditional jobs (Bagwell, 1986).

Support for the displaced homemaker population actually began in 1974 when the term displaced homemaker was coined by Sommers in California (The Displaced Homemaker Network, 1986). Sommers and Shields were the early founders of the Displaced Homemakers Movement. Through their efforts in 1975, the unmet needs of this population became known by the public; and the first displaced homemaker center was opened. By 1979, the National Displaced Homemakers Network was organized to serve as the coordinating body for the thousands of individuals and programs serving this growing constituency. From a small base of operation at one center in California in 1975, services to displaced homemakers grew to 700 centers across the United States by 1986 ("Displaced Homemakers", 1987).

These centers are funded by various sources across the United States including federal funds, state funds, private foundations, business, and community organizations such as religious and women's

groups. On the national level, the Displaced Homemakers Network has lobbied successfully since 1979 for federal funds to establish displaced homemaker programs. Through the Network's efforts and the support of legislators like Burke of California (The Displaced Homemakers Act, 1977), and Drinan of Massachusetts (The Status of Midlife Women, 1980); programs have been established in every state. Employment and training legislation (CETA) in 1980 provided five million dollars for displaced homemakers programs. The Job Training Act (JPTA) in 1982 named displaced homemakers as an eligible population. The year 1984 brought passage of three important pieces of legislation to assist displaced homemakers: The Carl Perkins Vocational Education Act, The Retirement Equity Act, and the Child Support Enforcement Amendments (The Displaced Homemakers Network, 1986).

In the State of Oklahoma, the State Department of Vocational Education began programs to assist displaced homemakers and single parents in 1978, utilizing funds allocated through state legislation. Beginning in 1984, these programs received support from the Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act which identified the need for services to single parents and displaced homemakers, thus authorizing the largest portion of money ever allocated for women's training programs (Hopkins, 1987).

There are 117,219 displaced homemakers in Oklahoma (Miller, 1987). The Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education currently has 26 Displaced Homemakers and Single Parents Programs (See Appendix A). Program statistics for FY 86-87 revealed these facts: 67 percent of the clients were between 22-44 years of age with 83 percent having incomes below the poverty level.

Twenty-six percent of the clients had less than a high school education (LeGrand, 1987). There are four Education Equity Programs in Oklahoma. Two are located in Oklahoma City, Francis Tuttle Area system and one in the Kiamichi system. In 1987, these programs served 300 students over the age of 20, with an average of 75 per center (Hargraves, 1988).

In eleven higher education institutions in Oklahoma, there are Student Support Services Programs which are funded through the Higher Education Act of 1965. This Act established a series of programs to help students overcome financial, social and/or class barriers to higher education. Displaced homemakers and single parents usually qualify for Student Support Services programs because these women generally have low incomes and are first generation college students.

Student Support Services programs are designed to improve the retention and graduation rates of low-income, first generation, and physically handicapped students. Eligible students receive assessments of their skills, personal counseling, tutoring, assistance with financial aid and academic counseling. A 1981 study conducted for the Department of Education found that students who receive the full range of services from Student Support Services are more than twice as likely to complete their first year of college as students who do not receive these services ("NCEOA Bulletin", 1987). The retention rates for these programs in Oklahoma average 75 percent per year (Rutledge, 1988).

The reason for the federal commitment to educational opportunity was expressed eloquently by President Lyndon Johnson when he proposed

the Higher Education Act 25 years ago.

> Nothing matters more (than education) to the future of our country; not our military preparedness--for armed might is worthless if we lack the brain power to build a world of peace; not our productive economy--for we cannot sustain growth without trained manpower; not our democratic system of government--for freedom is fragile if citizens are ignorant ("NCEOA Bulletin", 1987, p.2).

Traditional and Non-Traditional Female Careers

As the primary need of displaced homemakers and single parents is to become self-sufficient, programs designed to serve them must have strong career information and training components. The Single Parents/Homemakers Programs in the Oklahoma Vo-Tech system refer their students to both traditional and non-traditional female career training programs depending upon the interests and abilities exhibited by the students. The Education Equity Programs are primarily programs to promote non-traditional careers. Their focus is to inform the students of new opportunities in non-traditional careers as these careers will offer full employee benefits and more than minimum-wage salaries (Abel & Albright, 1979).

The Oklahoma Vocational Education System offers an excellent opportunity for students to be exposed to new technology and sex equity. No courses in the Vo-Tech system are offered as "men's classes or women's classes" ("Nontraditional Career Programs", 1988).

The Tulsa Area Vo-Tech schools offer the following non-traditional training programs:

--Electronics/Telecommunications Technician
--Avionics/Aviation Maintenance Technology
--Automotive Fundamentals and Counter Service
--Major Appliance Repair
--Cabinetmaking and Millwork

—Auto Mechanics
—Industrial Technology
—Masonry
—Plumbing
—Sheet Metal
—Auto Body
—Carpentry
—Drafting ("Nontraditional Career Programs", 1988, p. 1-5)

One of the major obstacles the displaced homemaker faces when considering career options is her inclination to view non-traditional careers as unfeminine. As this population already feels threatened by the world of work, program staff members and instructors must offer options which build self-confidence and avoid sex stereotyping. Some options which are available to women in both traditional and non-traditional training include apprentice and intern programs, brief "on the job" experiences and student support groups for students in similar programs. Presentations by women who are successful in their careers encourage the training women by proving to them that someone with an experience similar to theirs has overcome the odds and has become self-sufficient (Armstrong, 1983).

The most popular traditional female career training programs in Oklahoma are: practical nursing, office assistant, sales clerk, food services worker, cosmetology, housekeeper (McElroy, 1987). As a woman decides between a traditional and non-traditional career, she follows several steps. First, she assesses her values and interests. Next, she tests her basic skills in math, reading and language. Staff members evaluate these assessments to determine if developmental studies are necessary. The last step is career exploration to discover exactly what jobs in her area of interest are available for her to pursue.

If she chooses a non-traditional female job, she realizes she is taking a giant step. For many non-traditional jobs, she must now

prepare herself physically as well as mentally. Mental preparation includes learning new skills and developing her self confidence to be able to prove herself to her male co-workers. Although the federal government encourages employers to hire women in non-traditional jobs, the "new kid" will have to prove her qualifications and survive the initiation process (Strong, 1987). For example, all new construction workers are asked to find "sky hooks", "striped paint" or "left-handed monkey wrenches". This initiation is appropriate for all new workers, but women will have to be prepared to expect to meet the challenge of not only being new on the job but being a new woman on the job.

Preparing for any new job, traditional or non-traditional, requires motivation, a stable mental health, good physical health, career information and job skills. Once a woman makes her decision, then perserverance and commitment guide her to becoming successful.

Personal and Career Satisfaction Factors

Single parents and homemakers have high expectations as they enter new jobs. Their long battle of obtaining marketable skills and finding a job is coming to an end. These women hope to achieve large portions of their identity and life satisfaction from their careers (Fader, 1985). Their life roles have changed so drastically that they expect their new jobs to reward them economically and to help them feel fulfilled and challenged.

These are high expectations. Are they unrealistic? No, both men and women list challenge, independence and recognition high in a list of work motivators (Kagan, 1985). Table IV shows the differences in how men and women rate factors which motivate them to work.

TABLE IV

WHAT ARE YOUR WORK MOTIVATORS?

	Percent of WOMEN	Percent of MEN
To do a good job	91	85
To be challenged	81	71
To improve myself	81	82
To be financially secure . . .	69	70
Show others my abilities . . .	62	46
To become independent	51	59
To help others	51	57
To make a mark on the world .	22	26
To accumulate great wealth . .	15	30

Source: Kagan, Julia. "WHO SUCCEEDS, WHO DOESN'T—Results of a Major Survey". Working Women. Vol. 10 (1985), pp.112-117.

For women to become satisfied with their jobs, they need to feel successful. Pinkstaff and Williamson (1974) designed a development triangle to demonstrate how women must progress in order to become successful. The first obstacle is attitude--belief in her own capabilities. This positive attitude must be prevalent in her training and educational programs as she learns the skills to succeed. On the job, she further develops her skills and forms mentor relationships with women who have succeeded in her field. Satisfaction is visible on the job in the woman's relationships with her co-workers, her problem solving skills and her decision-making skills. One way in which women demonstrate confidence is through maintaining eye contact with all co-workers, both male and female.

Research in the area of work satisfaction has provided interesting insight into what factors affect work satisfaction. A strong relationship between work satisfaction and intrinisically rewarding work was the most significant finding in a study conducted by Mottaz (1985). Mottaz referred to McGregor's (1960) work of Theory X and Theory Y as his findings supported Theory Y in that redesigning a job should enhance work satisfaction. Workers are more satisfied when they enjoy the actual tasks which they complete on their jobs. Intrinsic rewards are of greater value to workers than social or organizational rewards.

Gysbers (1984) reported on several theories of job satisfaction. A controversial theory was by Herzberg who in 1959 identified satisfaction and dissatisfaction as two different sets of job factors which he divided in this way: 1. Satisfiers of motivators are achievement, recognition, advancement, responsibility and work

itself; and 2. Dissatisfiers of hygienes are compensation, supervision, co-workers, working conditions and company policies. Further studies revealed that Herzberg's idea was interesting but was difficult to confirm by future researchers.

Lawler and Porter (cited in Gysbers, 1984) studied attitude-behavior relationship on the job. Their 1967 study concluded that present job satisfaction is a function of past job performance, while present job performance is a function of effort which is determined by ability and role performance. Basically, their research concluded that the combination of the importance of rewards and the actual rewards determine the level of job satisfaction.

Summary

Single parents and homemakers are two special populations of women. They share one major problem: they must find employment to become self-sufficient. For the homemaker, this transition is very painful as she has been a long-term caregiver for others. Seeking help is especially difficult for her.

Fortunately, these two special populations are served effectively in Oklahoma by programs sponsored by the State Department of Vocational Education and funded by the Carl D. Perkins Act of 1984 and higher education programs funded by the Higher Education Act of 1965. These services assist women in accepting their current life status, setting realistic goals, making referrals for immediate family needs, developing their self-esteem, and teaching them new job skills and employment techniques.

Through personal and career counseling, individually and in groups, women begin to believe that their lives can change positively. Change begins to occur when a carefully considered career option is chosen. Next, the woman can learn new skills to become qualified for employment. Many of these women choose non-traditional female jobs if they are physically and emotionally suited for these jobs as they anticipate higher wages and better benefits.

As these single parents and displaced homemakers have entered these new careers after carefully examining their own motives and have trained themselves to be competitive, they become challenged by the job itself. Through an on-going process of believing in her abilities and constantly striving for survival, the single parent/homemaker becomes a valued employee in whatever field she decides to pursue. She is satisfied with her job, either in traditional or non-traditional fields if she receives respect for her abilities and is accepted as part of an organization which allows her to meet her primary goal of self-sufficiency.

CHAPTER III

PROCEDURES

Introduction

As was stated in the Introduction Chapter, the purpose of this study was to determine the equivalent levels of personal and career satisfaction of women trained in federally funded programs for non-traditional and traditional female careers.

Analysis of the Population

The population surveyed were single parents and displaced homemakers served by the special programs in the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational-Technical Education and the Oklahoma Higher Education systems. There are 26 Single Parents Homemakers Programs, four Education Equity Programs and 11 Student Support Services Programs in Oklahoma. A sample population of 120 participants from six of these programs were chosen. The lists of all programs were obtained from the State Department of Vocational-Technical Education and the Director of Special Programs at Rogers State College (See Appendix A).

Sample

Based on two facts, six programs were chosen to participate in the survey. The two facts were: each program serves women who fit the legal definitions of single parents and displaced homemakers, and

each program in the three categories is administered basically the same, offering the same services. Three Single Parents/Homemakers Programs from Tulsa, Pryor and Ponca City; two Education Equity Programs from Tulsa and Oklahoma City, and one Student Support Services Program from Claremore were chosen. Each coordinator of the chosen programs was asked to randomly distribute the two-page questionnaires to 20 participants. Of the respondents, 45 had completed their training programs and 17 had not completed.

Areas Researched

The areas researched through this study were the participants and the area coordinators of these special programs. The types of data obtained from the participants were demographic information including ages, ethnic groups, marital status, number of children and number of years as a single parent; the types of services and training programs utilized which they had utilized; their satisfaction with the services and training programs; their employment status and their ratings of job satisfaction factors.

The types of information gathered from the coordinators were assessment instruments used including career, interests, values; success rates of their programs; lists of services available to their students; and their ideas of improving services to better meet the needs of their students.

The instrument used to gather information from the participants was a questionnaire distributed by the program coordinators (See Appendix B). This questionnaire was designed following the job

satisfaction factors identified in the study of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards as determinants of work satisfaction completed by Mottaz in 1985. The questionnaire was reviewed by two single parents programs' coordinators and two state licensed counselors and field tested by ten displaced homemakers in October, 1988, prior to distribution for clarity and face validity.

Location of Research

Interviews with program coordinators were conducted during a ten-month period from December, 1987 to October, 1988. Questionnaires to program participants were distributed during the month of November, 1988. The distribution process included mailing the questionnaires to the program coordinators who then distributed to current and graduate participants on a random basis.

Analysis of the Data

The analysis of the data was a comparison of the satisfaction factors identified by the women in traditional careers and the women in non-traditional female careers. The demographic information was totaled and divided by the numbers of respondents in each group to provide an overall representation of the respondents. The responses to each question related to program satisfaction were tabulated to show the mean response for each program component. The responses to each question related to the factors of career satisfaction were tabulated to show the mean response and frequency. These responses were compared question by question for each group; women trained in traditional female careers and women trained in non-traditional female careers.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to determine the equivalent levels of personal and career satisfaction of single parents and displaced homemakers who trained in traditional female careers and non-traditional female careers. This chapter presents the results of the study in the following order: response rate, demographic data, levels of program service satisfaction, reasons for not working, factors of career satisfaction and equivalent levels of satisfaction from the programs and subsequent employment.

Response Rate

One hundred and twenty questionnaires were mailed to coordinators or directors of federally funded programs designed to serve single parents and displaced homemakers. Sixty-two questionnaires were returned for a response rate of 52 percent. Of those returned, twenty-seven (44 percent) were completed by women who were training or had completed training in a traditional female career program. Thirty-five (56 percent) of the returned questionnaires were from women enrolled in or graduated from non-traditional female career programs. A total of 26 (42 percent) of the respondents were employed in careers which matched their training programs.

Demographic Data

The first section of the questionnaire included five questions related to demographic information. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for each question and reported in Table V.

There was a higher number of respondents in the age bracket of 21-30 than any other age group reported. This fact was true for both traditional and non-traditional career trained participants. Eleven participants (41 percent) traditional and sixteen (45 percent) non-traditional career students were between the ages of 21-30. The next largest age group for traditional female career students was 31-40. For the non-traditional students, the next largest age group was 41-50. Only one respondent was over 50 and she had trained in a non-traditional career. The smallest age group for both categories was the under 20; one respondent (four percent) from the traditional and two (six percent) from the non-traditional career women.

Caucasians represented the highest numbers reported by both groups in the ethnic question. More Native Americans and Blacks chose traditional female careers than non-traditional, eight (30 percent) and five (18 percent) respectively. Only three (nine percent) Native Americans and two (five percent) Blacks were involved in non-traditional career training. No Hispanics nor Asians were reported by either group.

The marital status reported was overwhelmingly non-married. The question gave a choice between married, single and divorced. The choices in interpretation presented a problem as some respondents considered themselves single although they were actually divorced but preferred to be classified as single. The data reported only two

TABLE V

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION OF RESPONDENTS BY PARTICIPATION IN TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL CAREER TRAINING

(N = 62)

	TRADITIONAL		NON-TRADITIONAL	
VARIABLE	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
CURRENT AGE:				
Under 20	1	4	2	6
21-30	11	41	16	45
31-40	10	37	7	20
41-50	5	18	9	26
Over 50	0		1	3
ETHNIC BACKGROUND:				
Caucasian	14	52	30	86
Native American	8	30	3	9
Black	5	18	2	5
Hispanic	0		0	
Asian	0		0	
MARITAL STATUS:				
Married	2	7	5	19
Single	10	37	20	57
Divorced	15	56	10	29
NUMBER OF CHILDREN:				
1	4	25	8	42
2	8	50	6	32
3	3	19	4	21
4	1	6	1	5
NUMBER OF YEARS AS A SINGLE PARENT:				
Less than a year	1	4	1	4
1-2 years	12	50	9	32
3-4 years	3	13	11	39
5-6 years	1	4	4	14
Over 6 years	7	29	3	11

(seven percent) married in traditional training and five (five percent) married in non-traditional training; however, all of these participants reported two to six years spent as single parents.

The number of children living with their mothers ranged from one to four. The average number of children per respondent in both groups was two. Only one respondent in each group had four children each. Sixteen (51 percent) of the traditional respondents and 19 (54 percent of the non-traditional responded as having children living in their homes at the present time.

The years as a single parent reported ranged from less than a year (only one in each group) to over six years reported by 20 percent of traditional and 11 percent by non-traditional. The average number of years as a single parent was three to four years for each group.

Levels of Program Service Satisfaction

Services from Special Programs

The highest rate of satisfaction in the services delivered category was in the area of personal counseling. Each service area and their corresponding means of rates of satisfaction were tabulated and recorded in Table VI. On a scale of one to five with five being the highest rate of satisfaction, the service of personal counseling received a mean score of 4.4 from participants in traditional career programs and 4.3 from participants in non-traditional career programs. Group counseling received a mean score of 3.7 level of satisfaction from the participants in traditional career programs, but a lower mean of 3.0 was reported from the non-traditional career participants. The satisfaction level of job skills taught was a 3.9 from traditional

TABLE VI

RESPONDENTS' DEGREE OF SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES FROM SPECIAL PROGRAMS IN TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL CAREER PROGRAMS

(N = 62)

	Type of Training Program	
	Traditional	Non-Traditional
Services	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$
Personal Counseling	4.4	4.3
Group Counseling	3.7	3.0
Referral Services	3.2	3.3
Employment Services	3.3	3.1
Job Search Skills	3.0	3.4
Job Skills Taught	3.9	4.4

(Mean Scores were tabulated based on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest level of satisfaction.)

career students and 4.4 from non-traditional career students. The areas of service which received the lowest mean scores were employment services and job search skills; 3.2 was the mean score from both groups in these two areas of service.

The mean scores of the responses selected in each programmatic area by participants in traditional female careers and non-traditional careers varied only slightly (0.1 to 0.4) in the satisfaction rates of the areas of job skills taught and group counseling. Non-traditional career students rated a higher satisfaction rate in the area of job skills taught than traditional career students (4.4 to 3.9). In the area of group counseling, the traditional career students rated their satisfaction rate higher (3.7) than the 3.0 mean rating of non-traditional students. Each group responded with more satisfaction in the area of personal counseling (4.4 and 4.3) and less satisfaction in all areas related to employment services.

Training Programs

Question III asked the participants to indicate their level of satisfaction with their actual job training programs. Each area of the training programs and the means representing the satisfaction levels were tabulated and recorded in Table VII. The highest ratings of satisfaction were measured in the areas of guidance in choosing a training program, job skills learned, and understandable teaching methods. Neither group reported their training program to be too long nor too short. Appropriate lengths of time were allotted for training according to the ratings.

Each group, traditional and non-traditional, agreed in the rating of the guidance; 4.9 and 4.5 mean scores respectively. Appropriate

TABLE VII

RESPONDENTS' LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH TRAINING PROGRAMS BY TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL CAREER TRAINING

(N = 62)

	Type of Training Program	
	Traditional	Non-Traditional
Training Component	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$
Adequate Guidance	4.9	4.5
Length of Program too Long	2.3	1.7
Length of Program too Short	2.1	2.5
Job Skills Learned	4.7	4.3
Understandable Teaching Methods	4.1	4.5

(Mean Scores were tabulated based on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being the highest rate of satisfaction.)

teaching methods also received high ratings, 4.1 and 4.5 mean scores. Each group recorded high levels of satisfaction with all areas in their job training programs. Types of training programs which were reported by the participants in the traditional programs were occupational services, accounting, business and office, clerk/typist, nursing, secretarial, special and business education, and legal assistance. Non-traditional programs reported were avionics, airframe and power mechanics, microcomputer technology, major appliance repair, sBeet metal work, television technology, graphics technology, biology, computer programming, and electronics repair.

Reasons for Not Working

Thirty-six (58 percent) of the respondents were not working at the time of the survey. From the respondents in the traditional female career group, sixteen (59 percent) were not working. Twenty (57 percent) of the non-traditional group were not working. The reasons for not working and the corresponding percentages were tabulated and recorded in Table VIII.

The most frequent responses from both groups for not working were seeking additional training and currently enrolled in their original training program. Seven of the non-working traditional respondents (44 percent) and ten of the non-traditional respondents (50 percent) were currently involved in training programs at the time of the survey. Only one traditional student who was not employed gave the reason of not being able to find a job as the reason for not working. Some of the other reasons for not working which were listed in the category of "other reasons" by both groups were: moving to a new location, caring for a new baby, and newly married.

TABLE VIII

TRADITIONAL AND NON-TRADITIONAL CAREER PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS' REASONS FOR NOT WORKING

(N = 36)

Reason	Type of Training Program			
	Traditional		Non-Traditional	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Cannot Find a Job	1	6		0
Choose Not to Work		0	2	10
Health Problems	1	6	2	10
Additional Training	7	44	10	50
Moving to a New Location	3	20	2	10
Newly Married	2	12	2	10
New Baby	2	12	2	10

Factors of Career Satisfaction

Length of Time to Find Employment

Eleven (41 percent) of the women in the traditional career group and fifteen (43 percent) of the non-traditional career group were employed in jobs for which they had specifically trained. Women in non-traditional careers searched for employment slightly longer than women in traditional careers. Within three months, seven (64 percent) of traditional career women were employed. One non-traditional career participant (7 percent) sought employment for seven to 12 months. Three (20 percent) of the non-traditional group looked for over a year to find a job while 18 percent of the traditional group looked for that length of time. The lengths of time and their corresponding percentages were tabulated and recorded in Table IX.

Length of Time in Present Job

Question B in Section V asked the respondents to identify the lengths of time which they had been employed in their present positions. Table X records the lengths of time and their corresponding percentages. The most noticeable difference in lengths of time was that nine (60 percent) of the non-traditional career trained respondents had worked less than a year. Only four (36 percent) traditional respondents had been employed less than a year. One third (five) of the non-traditional students had worked for one to three years; also, five (46 percent) of traditional career respondents had been employed for one to three years. Both groups reported one respondent who had been employed three to five years; nine percent traditional and seven

TABLE IX

LENGTH OF TIME REQUIRED TO FIND EMPLOYMENT BY TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

(N = 26)

	Type of Training Program			
	Traditional		Non-Traditional	
Length of Time	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1-3 Months	7	64	9	60
4-6 Months	2	18	2	13
7-12 Months		0	1	7
Over a Year	2	18	3	20

TABLE X

LENGTH OF TIME IN PRESENT JOB BY TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAM

(N = 26)

	Type of Training Program			
	Traditional		Non-Traditional	
Length of Time	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Less Than a Year	4	36	9	60
1-3 Years	5	46	5	33
3-5 Years	1	9	1	7
Over 5 Years	1	9		0

percent non-traditional. Only one respondent from both groups reported employment for over five years (nine percent traditional).

Job Satisfaction

In rating the factors related to job satisfaction, the responses from both groups were almost equal in every category. Mean satisfaction rates of factors are recorded in Table XI. No one factor was rated excessively higher than another. The respondents reported a mean score of 4.4 to 4.7 on a scale of one to five with five being the highest level of satisfaction for each factor. In each group, the mean rate of satisfaction was high in every category. All respondents believed that their employers were pleased with their job performances and that their fellow employees were friendly and respected their abilities. They reported also that they enjoyed the work which they did.

The types of jobs reported by the traditional group were administrative assistant, secretary, bookkeeper, registered nurse, business teacher, legal assistant, and employment counselor. Non-traditional careers reported were office manager, window frame builder, comptroller, airframe and power mechanic, fleet services clerk, computer analyst, graphics artist, and television board supervisor.

When asked to identify the one primary reason for enjoying their jobs, five (33 percent) of non-traditionally employed women chose the daily work category. Only one (nine percent) of traditionally employed women chose the daily work category. Salary was chosen as the primary reason by three (27 percent) traditional career workers versus two (13 percent) non-traditional career workers. The selection

TABLE XI

MEAN SCORE FOR JOB SATISFACTION FACTORS BY TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAM

(N = 26)

	Type of Training Program	
	Traditional	Non-Traditional
Satisfaction Factor	$\bar{X}$	$\bar{X}$
Employer Pleased with Job Performance	4.7	4.8
Co-workers Respect your Abilities	4.4	4.7
Friendly Co-workers	4.4	4.8
Work Enjoyment	4.8	4.8

(Mean scores were tabulated from a base scale of 1-5 with 5 rated as the highest level of satisfaction.)

TABLE XII

PRIMARY REASONS FOR JOB SATISFACTION BY TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAM

(N = 26)

	Traditional		Non-Traditional	
Reason for Job Satisfaction	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Salary	3	27	2	13
Daily Work	1	9	5	33
Co-Workers		0		0
Feelings of Competency	6	55	8	47
Other (Benefits)	1	9		0

of feelings of competency was chosen as the primary reason for enjoying their work by approximately half the women in each group, six (55 percent) traditional and eight (63 percent) non-traditional. The reasons reported and their corresponding percentages of frequency are recorded in Table XII.

Equivalent Levels of Satisfaction

The last question on the questionnaire was simply, "Do you feel satisfied with your job?" Both groups rated a high percentage of job satisfaction, nine (82 percent) traditional and eleven (73 percent) non-traditional. These results are recorded in Table XIII. Only two (18 percent) traditional career women and three (20 percent) non-traditional expressed not being satisfied with their employment. One non-traditional career respondent did not respond to this question. Those respondents who were not satisfied with their jobs marked either feelings of competency or daily work as the one primary reason for job satisfaction.

Satisfaction factors from the services of special programs and training programs and job satisfaction levels were rated equally high. The respondents from each group reported high ratings of satisfaction in the individual services from the counseling and training programs. They also rated their satisfaction with their jobs as equally high.

TABLE XIII

OVERALL JOB SATISFACTION BY
TYPE OF TRAINING PROGRAM

(N = 26)

	Types of Training Programs			
	Traditional		Non-Traditional	
Satisfaction with Job	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
YES	9	82	11	73
NO	2	18	3	20
No Response		0	1	7

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes the study. It is divided into three sections: summary of the findings, conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations for future practice and research.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to determine the equivalent levels of personal and career satisfaction of women trained for traditional female careers and non-traditional female careers through federally funded programs. The study was prompted by a lack of information available to determine whether special counseling and job skills training programs which prepare women to enter traditional and non-traditional female careers are satisfactorily meeting the personal and career needs of the participants.

Specific objectives of the study were outlined as follows:

1. To define the characteristics of the special populations of single parents and displaced homemakers and to identify their personal and employment needs.

2. To identify special programs designed to meet the personal and career needs of single parents and displaced homemakers.

3. To determine the program satisfaction of women participating in federally funded programs.

4. To compare the career satisfaction of women trained in traditional female careers and of women trained in non-traditional female careers.

5. To determine the equivalent levels of personal and career satisfaction from the programs and subsequent employment.

A review of the literature indicated that single parents and displaced homemakers are undereducated, unskilled, disillusioned and underprepared economically and emotionally to assume full responsibility for their own financial security and for their children's security as well. They require personal and group counseling to learn decision making and assertiveness skills and to overcome their feelings of failure or loss from a divorce or widowhood. Skills assessments, career interest inventories and interviews are utilized to discover job interests and ability levels. Referral services provide financial assistance with tuition, day care and often transportation. Problem-filled bleak futures with seemingly no solutions become futures with possibilities when these women discover that financial assistance and emotional support are available.

These special programs funded through the Carl D. Perkins Education Act and Title IV of the Higher Education Act offer solutions to the problems of single parents and displaced homemakers. These federal funds plus state and local support lead these women through educational programs to teach them job skills and personal counseling to teach coping skills which enable these participants to become contributors to society instead of dependents.

One hundred and twenty questionnaires were mailed to participants in federally funded programs during the month of November, 1988, (Response rate of 52 percent). Interviews were conducted with

program coordinators or directors during the Fall of 1988. The participants were asked to provide demographic data, rate their satisfaction levels with the service from their special programs and their training programs, provide information regarding their employment and to rate factors of satisfaction with their employment.

The study indicated that the characteristics and needs of the women in the study were similar to those described in the literature research. Demographically, a woman in the survey was most likely to be single or divorced, Caucasian, have two children at home and to be between the ages of 21-30.

Survey participants had utilized all services available through the special programs at their educational institutions. Personal and group counseling received the highest satisfaction rating which agreed with the literature research as the primary focus of special programs is to provide individual assistance. The high rating from the survey on the satisfaction with counseling sustained the research that emotional support is vital to the success of single parents and displaced homemakers. As special programs which are federally funded are designed to serve students individually and to assist them in identifying and meeting their personal needs, the results of the survey substantiate the success of the personal counseling component.

The women surveyed were highly satisfied with the personal and group counseling and were satisfied with their subsequent employment. They reported confidence in using their new skills and enjoyment in the work which they are doing. Carefully leading these women through the process of choosing a training program for a new occupation and helping them to develop coping skills leads them to become satisfied employees. The high mean scores on the rating of satisfaction with

personal counseling (4.4 and 4.3) indicate that the women in special programs felt a bonding with the counselors in their programs. This bonding followed the women through their training programs as the counselors were available to assist them with problems and to help them to make adjustments in their schedules or programs as necessary. Consequently, the women became confident with themselves and their new skills. This self-confidence followed them into their work areas and encouraged them in facing new situations. The high rates of job satisfaction from both groups, traditional career women and non-traditional career women, indicate that counseling and training satisfaction lead to job satisfaction.

Employment counseling and job search training received the lowest rates of satisfaction as these areas are of secondary importance to the two types of programs surveyed. According to the coordinators of these programs, information related to employment search techniques is provided to the participants through group activities and interviews. However, other departments on the campuses such as graduate placement offer more indepth information on how to find employment.

Survey participants were highly satisfied with the guidance given to them in choosing their training programs. Assessments, computer programs such as Discover and SIGI-PLUS and interviews are the tools chosen to provide career information for the participants. These tools are supported in the literature, also. Two other information techniques reported by the coordinators were presentations by women employed in special fields and on-site visits to work places. These techniques were especially beneficial in the non-traditional programs as the program participants could receive a real-life exposure to the

work environment. Hearing another woman report her career success also proved to be motivational to the participants.

Approximately 42 percent of the survey respondents are now employed in their chosen fields. In both groups, traditional female careers and non-traditional careers, approximately 60 percent found employment within three months. More of the non-traditional career women (60 percent) had been employed less than a year. The highest percent of traditional career women (46 percent) were employed three to five years. Length of time on the job had little effect on the rating of job satisfaction factors.

In the ratings of job satisfaction, both groups reported high satisfaction in all areas. Enjoying the daily work which they do received a slightly higher rating than the other areas. On a scale of one to five, the lowest mean score was 4.4 reported by traditional career women in the area of co-workers' friendliness.

Feelings of competency were chosen by approximately 50 percent of each group as the primary factor in their job satisfaction. This factor definitely agrees with the research on job satisfaction factors. People who feel confident with their work and who enjoy their daily work activities reported higher job satisfaction rates.

Conclusions

Based upon the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Based upon the finding that women participants in federally funded programs in Oklahoma primarily need personal and group counseling, career guidance, and job skills training; they

have the same needs such as personal counseling, career direction, and job skills as single parents and displaced homemakers nationally.

2. Based upon the finding that the recipients of the services of special programs in Oklahoma rate their satisfaction with the services very high, special programs in vocational technical schools and higher education institutions in Oklahoma are meeting the personal and career needs of single parents and displaced homemakers.

3. Based upon the finding that single parents and displaced homemakers in Oklahoma are satisfied with the job skills which they are taught, with the teaching methods, and with the length of the training programs; the job skills training programs are successful in teaching these special populations.

4. Based upon the finding that single parents and displaced homemakers are finding satisfactory employment, federally funded job skills training programs in Oklahoma are qualifying single parents and displaced homemakers for employment which satisfies the career objectives of these women.

5. Based upon the finding that the job satisfaction rates of traditional career women and non-traditional career women are equally high, both groups are confident with their skills and feel competent on their jobs.

6. Based upon the findings that these women are satisfied and competent with the skills they learned in job skills training and are satisfied with the self-directive skills learned from personal counseling, they feel confident in the daily work in their new jobs and are satisfied with their employment in their chosen fields.

7. Based upon the findings of high rates of satisfaction with personal counseling and job training skills programs, special programs in Oklahoma which receive federal funding are meeting the career and personal needs of single parents and displaced homemakers. Personal counseling and job skills training are vital to the success of the single parent and displaced homemaker.

Recommendations

Practice

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Employment counseling and job search skills should be more emphasized in special programs. Personal counselors in these special programs should present more information to the participants related to interview skills, job search skills and resume writing or be more persuasive in referring the participants to job placement programs.

2. Federal funding should be continued for these programs. Women are overcoming employment barriers with the support of special programs. The population of single parents and displaced homemakers is growing, not decreasing; consequently, the need for services is growing.

3. Each educational institution should have a special program for returning adult women. A well-identified location of services on campuses would encourage higher enrollments of single parents and displaced homemakers and increase their retention numbers.

4. Personal counselors are necessary in educational institutions. Identifying special problems of students and providing emotional support leads to higher retention and completion rates.

5. In-service training for staff and faculty members should be conducted to educate them to the special needs and concerns of single parents and displaced homemakers.

Further Study

Further research should be conducted in the following areas:

1. Exit interviews should be held with participants in special programs who withdraw from their training programs to learn the reasons for withdrawal and to determine what services could have prevented the withdrawal.

2. Exit interviews with the training program graduates from both traditional female career programs and non-traditional female career programs to ascertain their employment goals, to receive suggestions for programmed changes and to verify addresses.

3. Follow-up surveys of special programs' graduates to discover employment information and to receive suggestions from the graduates on how the counseling programs and/or training programs could be changed to better prepare future graduates for employment.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

LISTS OF PROGRAMS

FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS

OKLAHOMA STATE VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

SINGLE PARENT/HOMEMAKERS PROGRAMS

Bill Willis Skills Center
Caddo-Kiowa
Canadian Valley
Central Oklahoma
Eastern Oklahoma
Francis Tuttle
Gordon Cooper
Great Plains
High Plains
Indian Capital
Indian Meridian
Kiamichi-Idabel
Kiamichi-McAlester
Kiamichi-Poteau
Metro Tech
Mid-America
Moore-Norman
Northeast Oklahoma
O.T. Autry
Pioneer
Red River
Southwest Oklahoma
Tulsa County
Western Oklahoma

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY PROGRAMS

Tulsa Area Vocational Techical School
Francis Tuttle Vocational Technical School
Metro Vocational Technical Center
Kiamichi Vocational Technical Center

HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Rogers State College
Bacone Junior College
East Central University
Langston University
Southeastern State University
Flaming Rainbow University
Carl Albert Junior College
Murray State College
Rose State College
Langston University
University of Oklahoma

APPENDIX B

SURVEY INSTRUMENTS

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please circle the number of the correct response.

I. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

A. What is your current age?
1. under 20 2. 21-30
3. 31-40 4. 41-50 5 over 50

B. Ethnic Background (optional question)
1. Caucasian 2. Native American
3. Black 4. Hispanic 5. Asian

C. Marital Status 1. Married 2. Single 3. Divorced
D. Number of Children _____
E. If applicable, number of years as a single parent
1. Less than a year 2. 1-2 years
3. 3-4 years 4. 5-6 years 5. over 6 years

II. SPECIAL PROGRAMS--Area Vocational Technical Schools or Higher Education Program

Please rate your satisfaction with the services which you received from your special programs on a scale from 1-5 with 5 being **excellent, 4-above average, 3-average, 2-below average, 1-not applicable as you did not receive the service.**

1.	Personal Counseling	5	4	3	2	1
2.	Group Counseling	5	4	3	2	1
3.	Referral Services	5	4	3	2	1
4.	Employment Counseling	5	4	3	2	1
5.	Job Search Training	5	4	3	2	1
6.	Job Skills Training	5	4	3	2	1

III. TRAINING PROGRAMS

A. Have you completed a job skills training program?

1. Yes 2. No 3. Currently enrolled

B. Please list the name of your training program.

_____

Rate the following on a scale of 1-5 with 5 being that you AGREE completely with the statement and 1 being that you do NOT AGREE with the statement in any way.

C. The guidance given to you in choosing your training program was adequate.

5 4 3 2 1

D. The overall length of the training program was too long.

5 4 3 2 1

E. The overall length of the training program was too short.

5 4 3 2 1

F. You learned the job skills that you wanted to learn.

5 4 3 2 1

IV. IF NOT EMPLOYED, please circle the reason why.

1. cannot find a job
2. choose not to work
3. health reason
4. seeking additional training (list area_____)
5. other reason _____

IF YOU HAVE NEVER HAD A JOB IN YOUR TRAINED AREA, YOU HAVE ANSWERED ALL OF YOUR QUESTIONS AT THIS POINT.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

V. IF EMPLOYED, please answer these questions.

Job Title_____

A. How long a period before you became employed in your chosen field? Circle the time period.

1. 1-3 months
2. 4-6 months
3. 7-12 month
4. over 1 year

B. How long in your present job?

1. under a year
2. 1-3 years
3. 3-5 years
4. over 5 years

Please rate the following according to the scale of 1-5 with 5 being the most satisfied and 1 being not satisfied in any way.

C. Your employer is pleased with your job performance.

5 4 3 2 1

D. Your fellow co-workers respect your abilities.

5 4 3 2 1

E. Your fellow co-workers are friendly to you.

5 4 3 2 1

F. You enjoy the work which you do.

5 4 3 2 1

G. Please circle the <u>one</u> primary reason why you enjoy your job.

1. salary
2. daily work
3. other co-workers
4. location of your job
5. your feelings of competency
6. other---please specify_____

H. Do you feel satisfied with your job?

1. YES 2. NO

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR TAKING YOUR TIME TO COMPLETE THIS QUESTIONNAIRE.

Interview Questions

1. What process is used to assist women in choosing a career in which to train?
2. What information leads you to recommend a non-traditional female career to a student?
3. Who are the most satisfied workers? Traditional or Non-traditonal?
4. In your opinion, what is the true possibility of a woman finding employment in a non-traditional female field in Oklahoma?
5. Do male employees treat your clients as respected and well-trained workers?
6. Is the pay scale equivalent for your clients and their male co-workers?
7. Please estimate the number of your clients who return to your programs for follow-up counseling? What are the problems they identify?
8. Please estimate the number of your clients who return to your program for follow-up counseling. What are the problems they identify?
9. How are the single parents/homemakers surviving on their own?
10. How would you like to improve the services which you are now offering if additional funds were available?

VITA

Victoria Partridge Venable

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Science

Thesis: CAREER AND PERSONAL SATISFACTION OF WOMEN PARTICIPANTS IN FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAMS IN OKLAHOMA

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