

NONTRADITIONAL JOB TRAINING PROGRAM FOR WOMEN;
AN IMPACT ANALYSIS

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This study focuses on the problem of women who are prevented from competing in the labor market because they lack appropriate job skills. As a result many of these women remain in poverty.

Title III of the Job Training Partnership Act (1982) has allocated funds to train dislocated women in occupations which are primary dominated by men. The primarily objective of this training is to place these women in apprenticeship programs and unsubsidized employment in occupations and industries where women are underrepresented and pay scales are greater. The purpose of this study was to evaluate whether the training program was effectively helping women in finding higher pay employment, nontraditional jobs, and full-time employment.

The Problem

According to the Current Population Reports (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1982), about two out of every three adults who fall into the federal definition of poverty are women. One of the major problems that women are facing in terms of poverty is that women concentrate in several occupations which are traditionally lower paying than the traditionally male-dominated occupations. The Women's Bureau of the U.S. Department of Labor (1983, p.51) indicates that "in 1981 women and men still are employed largely in different occupation groups. The greatest number of women continued to find employment in office and service jobs, and the greatest number of men continued to be employed in skilled craft, operative, and management jobs." Sexton (1977) conducted an analysis on male-female earnings. She found that fully employed women only earn \$6 for every \$10 earned by fully employed men. The wage difference between men and women still persisted in 1983 and 1984. The U.S. Department of Labor indicated that in 1983 and 1984 women only earned 66 percent of male earnings. Sexton (1977) pointed out that if females were paid the same wage as men, about half of the families now living in poverty would not be poor.

Literature Review

Several major theories have addressed the problem of poverty. One of these theories is the dual labor market theory. This theory (Baron and Hymer, 1968; Rees, 1968; Ferman, 1967; Fushfeld, 1968; Bluestone, 1970; Wachtel, 1970; Liebow, 1967; Dizard, 1968; Wellman, 1971; Lewis, 1967, Brown, 1965; Malcolm, 1966; Piore, 1969) argues that the labor market is divided into a primarily and a secondary market. The primary market provides an environment which possesses high wage rates, good working conditions, high employment, stability, chances of advancement and promotion, rights and equality, and due process in the administration of work rules. On the other hand, the secondary labor market provides an environment where jobs have low wage rates and fringe benefits, poor working conditions, high turnover rate, little chance of advancement and promotion, and often arbitrary and capricious supervision. Workers in the primary market receive sufficient and fair incomes, and usually these workers are male, white and moderate age range.

In contrast, workers in the secondary labor market are women and minorities, who are considered the unstable work force members such as temporary workers. They usually are not members of labor unions and often dispense volume services rather than producing durable items. They receive relatively very low wage rates and they can increase their income only if they work overtime.

A second theory addresses the problem of women in poverty is the theory of segregation and discrimination. Parnes (1984, p.168) defines that "labor market discrimination exists when an identifiable group of individuals are systematically rewarded less favorably than others and there are no corresponding differences in productivity. Differential rewards may be in the form of hiring, compensation, promotion, or any other condition of employment." Chafetz (1973, pp.38-39) explains the causes for job segregation and discrimination as follows: "We all have mental stereotypes which reflect our ideas of masculinity and femininity. Men are expected to be virile, athletic, strong, brave, aggressive, unemotional, rational, dominating, success oriented, ambitious, confident, decisive. Women are expected to be domestic, maternal, nurturing, passive, emotional, compassionate, intuitive, sensitive, dependent, submissive, shy, affectionate, innocent". Norman (1980, pp.12-13) suggests that women are being discriminated against because society assumes the following: 1) men are superior to women and

should be dominant over them; and 2) the two sexes are expected to do different work. Women's work is defined in terms of child earning nurturance while men's work is in terms of protection and occupation.

The third theory to explain why women are in poverty is the theory of human capital investment. This theory suggests that many women do not have the skills to perform the work as required by the occupations which are traditionally dominated by men. Jobs in this labor market tend to have high wage rates, maximum benefits and promotion prospects. Women who do not have the skills as required by these high-pay jobs seem to stay in those occupations which have minimum wage rates, no advancement opportunity and poor working conditions. Human capital investment theory implies that job training and education are the solutions for the problem of women in poverty (Becker, 1962, 1964, 1966; Schultz 1960, 1961, 1962, 1970, 1971). This theory further suggests that in the long run investment of human capital in job training tends to produce a higher return from the investment.

The above theories seem to explain why women are in poverty. There have been several studies supporting nontraditional job training for women as a solution for the problem. In 1978, the U.S. Department of Labor developed a model on nontraditional occupations in Boston (namely, the Nontraditional Occupations Program - NTO) which was one of the 30 programs for women nationwide funded during FY '77 as a pilot effort under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) Title III. During the first six months of NTO's operation, the participating women had wages increased by 53 percent compared to their last job before joining the training program.

A similar model was also conducted in Denver in 1978, namely, "Better Jobs for Women" (BJW). The findings showed that the beginning average salary represented an average income increase of 250 percent compared with the enrollers' previous earnings (U.S. Department of Labor, 1978).

Magnum, Booton and Frobes (1981) evaluated the "WIN NCC Special Model Program, Alternative Job Options for Women Program" in Utah. The objective of the program was to place female AFDC recipients in nontraditional employment. Their report concluded that nontraditional employment did have a higher rate of remuneration than traditional employment, so job seeking in this direction should have a positive pay off.

Most research studies tend to imply that nontraditional job training programs have a positive impact on women participants. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to further confirm knowledge, and provide implications for social work practitioners, educators and scholars to address women's issues related to employment. The major research questions of this study are: 1) Is a ~~nontraditional job training program effectively helping women participants in finding higher-pay employment?~~ 2) ~~Is the training program effectively helping women participants in finding nontraditional jobs?~~ 3) ~~Is the training program effectively helping women in finding full-time employment?~~

Method

Sampling

This research is a quasi-experimental study with an experimental group which contains 346 women program participants and a control group which contains 110 matched subjects. The experimental group is referred to the participants who completed an eight-week session on nontraditional job training conducted by PREP, Inc. in Ohio during 1985 to 1986. The control group was matched from applicants of the training program who met all criteria for the program except they were not classified as dislocated workers or they had been accepted by the program but they were not interested in it.

The goal of the training program, as set forth by PREP, Inc., was to provide participants with a series of program activities designed to enhance employability, with particular emphasis on enhancing their chances of entering nontraditional blue collar occupations. The basic service modes undertaken to reach this objective were pre-apprenticeship training, apprenticeship outreach, and outreach in targeted occupations where women are underrepresented.

In undertaking the PREP-Ohio program, PREP, Inc. had established three training sites, Columbus, Dayton, and Toledo. The services and activities provided during an eight-week training session included: 1) adult basis education, 2) skill inventorying and vocational guidance, 3) test taking and test sophistication, 4) work orientation, 5) placement and follow-up activities, and 6) supportive services. The program operated on an eight week cycle composed of six weeks of class and two weeks of concentrated placement activities. During the six

classroom weeks participants received approximately 20 hours of instruction weekly, averaging four hours daily. Of the 20 weekly hours, three to six hours were spent in physical training activities at the local YWCA.

Hypotheses

1. At follow-up, women participating in the nontraditional jobs training program earn higher wage rates than those who did not participate in the program.
2. Women participating in the training program earn higher wage rates than earned in their jobs prior to entering the training program.
3. The percentage of program participants employed in nontraditional jobs is higher than the percentage of non-participants employed in nontraditional jobs.
4. Women participating in the program obtain more full-time employment than those who did not participate in the program.

Instrumentation

To test the hypotheses, a questionnaire is used to collect data from the subjects regarding their employment status, job search experience, hours of work per week, why not looking for a job, positions applied for, beginning wage rate, current wage rate, promotion, likeness for the present job, and participated in other training program.

Data Collection

The Program started in March, 1985 and data collection began at that point. Before a training cycle began, all experimental and control group subjects were requested to fill out a socioeconomic background questionnaire. This questionnaire was to assure that both the experimental and control groups were homogeneous.

On the 30-, 60- and 90-day following completion of the eight-week training program, the subjects were contacted by trained interviewers through telephone calls. Those subjects who could not be reached by phone were sent the follow-up questionnaire. An enclosed stamped envelope was used to enhance the return of the questionnaire.

Findings

At the time of the 30-day follow-up, 263 (76.0%) of the experimental group subjects responded to the questionnaire compared to 88 (80.0%) in the control group. At the 60-day follow-up, 225 (65.0%) of the experimental group subjects responded to the questionnaire compared to 74 (67.3%) in the control group. At the 90-day follow-up, 209 (60.4%) of the experimental group subjects completed the interview compared to 55 (50.0%) in the control group. Statistical analyses were conducted to compare the homogeneity of both groups. It was found that there was no statistically significant difference between the groups in terms of most of the socioeconomic variables. Table I summarizes the socioeconomic background of the experimental and control subjects as follows:

TABLE I

A Comparison of Socioeconomic Characteristics
Between the Experimental and Control Group

Socioeconomic Variables	Experimental Group	Control Group
Age (years)	30.9	30.3
Weight (lbs)	150.6	152.2
Head of Household	52.6%	56.4%
Number of Dependents	1.5	1.8
Education (years)	11.9	11.6
Income	\$5,000 - \$9,999	\$5,000 - \$9,999
Public Welfare	41.9%	51.8%
Currently Working	6.6%	10.0%
Hours of Work Per Week	37.1	35.3
Average Hourly Wage	\$ 5.2	\$ 5.2

30-Day Follow-up

Table II summarizes the findings for the 30-day follow-ups. The results are listed as follows:

1. At 30-day follow-up, the percentage of program participants (who had been employed since entering the program) who looked for a job was less than the percentage of non-participants.

2. Women participating in the PREP, Inc. job training program earned greater wage rates than those who did not participate in the program.
3. The program participants who had been employed since participating in the program worked more hours than the non-participants.
4. The average beginning hourly wage rate of the program participants was greater than the non-participants.
5. The percentage of program participants employed in nontraditional jobs was greater than the percentage of non-participants employed in nontraditional jobs.
6. Women participating in the program obtained full-time employment more often than those who did not participate in the program.

60-Day Follow-up

Table III summarizes the findings for the 60-day follow-ups and the findings tend to support the following statements:

1. At the 60-day follow-up, women participating in the nontraditional job training program earned greater hourly wage rates than those who did not participate in the program.
2. The percentage of program participants employed at the 60-day follow-up period was greater than the percentage of non-participants in the same period.
3. The control group subjects tended to spend more hours in job search than the experimental group subjects in the 60-day follow-up period.
4. The percentage of control group subjects looking for a job (who had been employed during the 60-day follow-up) tended to be greater than the percentage of the experimental group at the 60-day follow-up period.

5. Women participating in the program worked more hours than the non-participants.
6. The percentage of women participating in the program tended to have full-time employment more than non-participants.
7. The beginning wage rate of the program participants was greater than that of the non-participants.
8. The percentage of program participants employed in nontraditional occupations was greater than the percentage of non-participants employed in nontraditional occupations.
9. The average hourly wage rate of the experimental group subjects at the 60-day follow-up was greater than their average hourly wage rate earned in the last job prior to entering the program.

90-Day Follow-up

Table IV summarizes the findings for the 90-day follow-ups. It was found that:

1. The percentage of program participants employed at the 90-day follow-up period was greater than the percentage of non-participants in the same period.
2. The control group subjects tended to spend more hours in job search than the experimental group subjects in the 90-day follow-up period.
3. The percentage of control group subjects looking for a job (who had been employed during the 90-day follow-up) tended to be greater than the percentage of the experimental group at the 90-day follow-up period.
4. The beginning wage rate of the program participants was greater than that of the non-participants.

5. The percentage of program participants employed in nontraditional occupations was greater than the percentage of non-participants employed in nontraditional occupations.
6. The average hourly wage of the experimental group subjects earned at the 90-day follow-up period was greater than the hourly wage earned in the last job prior to entering the program.

TABLE II
Results of 30-Day Follow-up

Variables	Total N=356	Experimental		Control		
		Group	Missing	Group	Missing	
		N=263	83	N=88	22	
		Subtotal: 346		Subtotal: 110		

Have been Employed since the program (as % of subtotal N)						
Yes		111	(32.1%)	40	(36.4%)	
No		152	(43.9%)	48	(43.6%)	
No Response		83	(24.0%)	22	(20.0%)	
Currently Employed						
Yes (as % of having		85	(76.6%)	27	(67.5%)	
No been employed)		26	(23.4%)	8	(20.0%)	
No Response		--	(0.0%)	5	(12.5%)	
Looking for a Job **						
Yes (as % of having		42	(37.8%)	18	(45.0%)	
No been employed)		57	(51.4%)	10	(25.0%)	
No Response		12	(10.8%)	12	(30.0%)	
Why look for a Job (as % of having been employed)						
Need More Money		11	(9.9%)	5	(12.5%)	
Hours of Job Search per Week (for those not employed)						
		10.1		10.8		
Hourly Wage Rate (mean)	\$ 5.90			\$ 4.34		***
Hours of Work per Week	38.30			29.30		***
Employment (as % of having been employed) ***						
Part-time		18	(16.2%)	17	(42.5%)	
Full-time		77	(16.2%)	15	(37.5%)	
Beginning Hourly						
Wage Rate	\$ 5.64			\$ 4.15		***
Like the Job (as% of having been employed)						
		57	(51.4%)	23	(57.5%)	
Types of Job Worked						
(as % of those having been employed)						
Traditional		26	(23.4%)	26	(65.0%)	
Nontraditional		71	(63.9%)	9	(22.5%)	
Missing		14	(12.6%)	5	(12.5%)	

** Significant at .05 level

*** Significant at .01 level

TABLE III
Results of 60-Day Follow-up

Variables	Total N=365	Experimental Group Missing N=225 121 Subtotal: 346	Control Group Missing N=74 36 Subtotal: 110
Have been Employed since 30-Day Follow-up (as % of subtotal)			**
Yes		125 (36.2%)	31 (28.2%)
No		100 (28.9%)	43 (39.1%)
No Response		121 (34.9%)	36 (32.7%)
Currently Employed (as % of those who had been employed since 30-Day Follow-up)			
Yes		104 (83.2%)	26 (83.9%)
No		21 (16.8%)	5 (16.1%)
Looking for a Job (as % of those who had been employed since 30-Day Follow-up)			
Yes		36 (28.8%)	18 (58.1%)
No		70 (56.0%)	10 (32.3%)
No Response		19 (15.2%)	3 (9.7%)
Why look for a Job (as % of those who had been employed since 30-Day Follow-up)			
Need More Money		15 (12.0%)	7 (22.6%)
Hours of Job Search per Week		7.50	12.50
(for those not employed since 30-Day Follow-up)			***
Hours Wage Rate (mean) \$	6.53		\$ 4.48
Hours Working per Week	38.50		32.60
Employment (as % of those who had been employed since 30-Day Follow-up)			
Part-time		16 (12.8%)	12 (38.7%)
Full-time		97 (77.6%)	18 (58.1%)
Beginning Hourly Wage Rate	\$ 6.50		\$ 4.43
Like the Job (as % of those having been employed since 30-Day Follow-up)		81 (64.8%)	25 (80.6%)
Types of Job Worked (as % of those having been employed since 30-Day Follow-up)			***
Traditional		25 (20.0%)	18 (58.1%)
Nontraditional		89 (71.2%)	12 (38.7%)
Missing		11 (8.8%)	1 (3.2%)

** Significant at .05 level

*** Significant at .01 level

TABLE IV
Results of 90-Day Follow-up

Variables	Total N=365	Experimental		Control	
		Group	Missing	Group	Missing
		N=209	137	N=55	55
		Subtotal: 346		Subtotal: 110	
Have been Employed since 60-Day Follow-up					
(as % of subtotal)					
Yes		133 (38.4%)		24 (21.8%)	
No		76 (22.0%)		31 (28.2%)	
No Response		137 (39.6%)		55 (50.0%)	
Currently Employed (as % of those who had been employed since 60-Day Follow-up)					
Yes		105 (78.9%)		21 (87.5%)	
No		28 (21.1%)		3 (12.5%)	
Looking for a Job (as % of those who had been employed since 60-Day Follow-up)					
Yes		38 (28.6%)		13 (54.2%)	
No		74 (55.6%)		18 (33.3%)	
No Response		21 (15.8%)		3 (12.5%)	
Why look for a Job (as % of those who had been employed since 60-Day Follow-up)					
Need More Money		12 (9.02%)		9 (37.5%)	
Hours of Job Search					
per Week		6.30		11.00	
(for those not employed since 60-Day Follow-up)					
Hours Wage Rate (mean)		\$ 7.50		\$ 5.24	
Hours Working per Week		37.20		38.50	
Employment (as % of those who had been employed since 60-Day Follow-up)					
Part-time		22 (16.5%)		5 (20.8%)	
Full-time		99 (74.4%)		17 (70.8%)	
Beginning Hourly					
Wage Rate		\$ 7.09		\$ 4.82	
Like the Job (as % of those having been employed since 60-Day Follow-up)					
		81 (60.9%)		21 (87.5%)	
Types of Job Worked (as % of those having been employed since 60-Day Follow-up)					
Traditional		21 (15.8%)		14 (58.3%)	
Nontraditional		94 (70.7%)		9 (37.5%)	
Missing		10 (7.5%)		1 (4.2%)	

** Significant at .05 level

*** Significant at .01 level

Discussion and Implications

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of nontraditional job training programs for women. The primary evaluation questions were: Was the PREP's training program effectively helping women participants secure higher paying employment? Was the program effectively helping participants find nontraditional jobs? Was the program effectively helping participants obtain full-time employment? The data in this study tend to support that at the 30-, 60-, and 90-day follow-ups, women participating in the training program earned greater hourly wage rates than the non-participants. The average hourly wage rate for the program participants at the 30-, 60-, and 90-day follow-up were \$5.90, \$6.53 and \$7.50 respectively as compared to \$4.34, \$4.48 and \$5.24 in the control group. Analyzing beginning hourly wage rates, the evaluator found that the participants earned greater average beginning hourly wage rate than the non-participants. The data also support the fact that the percentage of program participants employed in nontraditional jobs was greater than the percentage of non-participants employed in nontraditional jobs at the 30-, 60-, and 90-day follow-up periods. The findings indicate that the percentage of program participants employed was significantly greater than the non-participants at the 30-, 60-, and 90-day follow-up periods. Meanwhile, the results of the analysis appear to support that the program participants seemed to work more hours and employed more in full-time than the non-participants at the 30- and 60-day follow-ups. On the whole, the training program seems to support the four hypotheses as presented before.

The findings tend to reflect that nontraditional job training programs have high potential to remove employment barriers that most women are facing. Job training programs seem to provide women the skills to compete in the job market. The data in this study support that nontraditional job training programs tend to bridge the gaps between the primary and secondary labor market; they minimize job segregation and discrimination; and they give more opportunities for women to fight for equality in society.

Implications for Further Research

The current study tends to focus short term rather than long term impact. Therefore, it is necessary to conduct further research to identify barriers which impact upon

long term effectiveness on training programs. Further research is also needed to identify those nontraditional occupations in which women are having problems entering. In addition, research is suggested to focus on those nontraditional occupations in which women have high potential for obtaining and continuing employment.

Another area of research is to study the impacts of family variables on the women's participation in the labor force. It appears that even though women obtain the skills required by nontraditional jobs, family barriers may inhibit them to fully participate in the primary labor market.

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