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## ABSTRACT

Project ACCESS, funded by the Office of Education and Employment of the U.S. Department of Education, is developing and field testing a method to further the recognition of women's life experience learning. In order to determine the transferability of women's life experience learning to employment and to vocational education, three activities were undertaken: (1) a survey of adult women's life experiences and identification of the skills learned through experience (conducted on 131 women, mostly between the ages of 35 and 55, who were attending women's centers, displaced homemaker centers, and counseling centers in seven states); (2) identification of the skills required in selected occupations and vocational education programs through a survey of employers and educators; and (3) an analysis to estimate the proportion of adult women who would have learned, through their life experiences, the skills required in these occupations and programs. The results of the study confirmed the basic hypothesis that adult women have a wide variety of life experiences through which they acquire skills and knowledge relevant to employment and to vocational education. As homemakers, the women in this sample assumed responsibility for the welfare of their families and their communities, while spending their "free" time developing advanced skills and new areas of expertise. It can be concluded that the experientially developed skills of the women in this sample are transferable to the Project ACCESS occupations and vocational education programs. The findings of this study underscore the importance of recognizing life experience learning and the potential usefulness of self-ratings of competence when selecting women for jobs and educational programs.. (KC)

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Project ACCESS: A Method for Assessing the Transferability  
of Women's Life Experience Learning

C. Brooke Gruenberg and Ruth B. Ekstrom  
Educational Testing Service

Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the  
New England Educational Research Organization

April 30, 1981

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Project ACCESS: A Method for Assessing the Transferability  
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INTRODUCTION

Today adult women are re-entering the labor force and postsecondary educational institutions in unprecedented numbers. These women bring with them a wealth of experientially-developed skills and abilities. Their successful integration into businesses and schools presents a great challenge to the employers and educators of the 1980's.

The obstacles to such integration are many. In addition to the age and sex stereotypes prevalent in our society, there is a belief that the unpaid work done by women in the home and the community is trivial, involves little significant learning, and is not relevant to paid employment or to education.

Because much of women's experiential learning does not take place under the supervision or sponsorship of employers or faculty, there are special problems associated with transferring such learning to paid employment and to postsecondary education. Ekstrom and Eliason (1978) have identified four major barriers to the recognition of women's life experience learning. First, women may not realize that the activities they engage in are learning experiences (identification); second, employers and educators may not perceive the linkages between women's experiential learning and the skills and knowledge needed for satisfactory

performance in a job or an educational program (articulation); third, there are few techniques to adequately determine and demonstrate the nature and extent of experiential learning (assessment and documentation); and fourth, any method of facilitating the recognition of experiential learning must have benefits great enough to offset the costs to the employer or educational institution (financial feasibility).

Eliason (1977), in a study of access to vocational education for women in community and junior colleges, found that: (1) women are tracked into "dull, dead-end, and poorly paying" clerical, allied health, or retail sales jobs; (2) instructors, deans, and counselors need in-service training in attracting and keeping women students in nontraditional occupational curricula; and (3) admissions, guidance, and testing policies do not provide the "one step service" needed by women who have a variety of other responsibilities, and rarely include providing credit for life experience learning.

Despite these problems, there is a growing body of literature which shows that adult women acquire important and job-relevant skills and knowledge through their unpaid work at home and in the community.

Nickse (1975) identified ten competency areas involved in homemaking. Ratings of the job-relevance of these skills by administrators in human services agencies indicated that all ten were considered essential or highly desirable for human services workers. Ratings by human services educators showed that nine of the ten were considered relevant for academic credit, seven of these at the upper division level. In another study of the homemaker's role, Arvey and Begalla (1975) used the

Position Analysis Questionnaire (PAQ) to compare homemaking with the profiles for more than 1,000 occupations; the most similar occupations were patrolman, home economist, airport maintenance chief, kitchen helper, fire fighter, and troubleshooter.

Northeastern University's Women's Career Program has identified the skills acquired through experiential learning that facilitate the entrance of women into nontraditional jobs (Rich, 1977).

Muller (1975) found that adult women's unpaid work allowed them to maintain the skills they had acquired through education and paid work, and aided in their future job searches. In addition, 44% of the women in public relations work who were surveyed by Hybels (1979) reported having developed their job skills totally or in part through volunteer work experience. Comparable figures for other occupations were: management, 39%; counseling, 28%; teaching, 25%; bookkeeping, 23%; clerical work, 22%; and research and writing, 20%.

This paper reports a survey of the life experience of adult women, part of work being carried out by Project ACCESS. Funded by the Office of Education and Employment of the U.S. Department of Education, Project ACCESS is developing and field testing a method to further the recognition of women's life experience learning. Project ACCESS has two components: employment and vocational education. Information on both components, as they relate to the survey of women's life experience, is included here.

#### METHOD

In order to determine the transferability of women's life experience learning to employment and to vocational education, three activities were

undertaken: (1) a survey of adult women's life experience and identification of the skills learned through these experiences; (2) identification of the skills required in selected occupations and vocational education programs; and (3) an analysis to estimate the proportion of adult women who would have learned, through their life experiences, the skills required in these occupations and programs.

#### Women's Questionnaire

As a first step, based on personal interviews with groups of women, the Project ACCESS staff developed a questionnaire to determine the frequency and extent of involvement of adult women in homemaking and parenting activities, volunteer work and community service, recreation and hobbies, formal and nonformal education, and paid work. Demographic information was also sought, as were self-ratings of competence in 28 skills. Slightly different forms of the questionnaire were prepared so that the same set of questions would not be administered to more than nine women; therefore, the percentages reported in this paper are based on the number of women who responded to each question, not on the total sample size.

One hundred and forty-four questionnaires were mailed to women's centers, displaced homemaker centers, and counseling centers in seven states, and were completed by women who, in the summer of 1979, were taking part in career and educational counseling programs at these centers.

#### Employer Questionnaires

Employer questionnaires--to identify the importance of certain

skills in selecting workers for entry-level jobs--were prepared by the Project ACCESS staff for each of 11 occupations: airline reservation agent, bank clerk/teller, claims adjuster, credit/collection worker; electronics assembler, floral designer, home health aide, insurance sales agent, personnel worker, photo lab technician, and social service aide. The items included in the questionnaires were based on occupational descriptions and on interviews held by project staff with employers of workers in the target occupations in two different cities. This was done to ensure that the questionnaire items represented a wide range of selection criteria.

These questionnaires, listing the skills, personal characteristics, and prior experiences required for job success were then sent to nine employers of workers in each of the target occupations. Following a method adapted from Primoff's (1975) job element technique, the employers were asked to rate each item for selecting new employees (using the scale: 3 = found only in superior new employees; 2 = necessary for average job performance; 1 = minimum necessary for job; 0 = not relevant).

#### Educator Questionnaires

The Project ACCESS staff also prepared educator questionnaires--to identify the importance of certain skills in selecting students for, and awarding advanced placement in, vocational education programs--for each of nine program areas: computer programming, cook/chef, drafting, graphic arts/lithography, library technology, medical records technology, occupational therapy, respiratory therapy, and welding. The questionnaires were based on vocational education curriculum descriptions and outlines

for the selected programs, and on the skills and experiences identified in the Women's Questionnaire.

Each questionnaire listed the skills, personal characteristics, and prior experiences that appeared relevant for the vocational education program of interest. These questionnaires were mailed to nine vocational educators teaching in each of the program areas. The educators were asked to rate each item twice: first, for selecting students to be enrolled in the program (using the scale: 3 = found only in superior new students; 2 = necessary for average course performance; 1 = minimum necessary to pass course; 0 = not relevant), and second, for awarding advanced placement or course exemption (using the scale: 3 = very important in identifying these students; 2 = valuable in identifying these students; 1 = little help in identifying these students; 0 = not relevant).

## RESULTS

### Women's Questionnaire

#### Participants

One hundred and thirty-one adult women responded to the questionnaire. Although the group ranged in age from the early 20's to "over 65," the majority (69%) were between 35 and 55 years old; the mean age was 40. Eighty-three percent of the respondents described themselves as white, 13% as Black, 3% as Hispanic, and 1% as American Indian. Thus, while there were no Asian-Americans in the sample, and Hispanics were underrepresented, the sample came close to reflecting the proportional representation of these groups in the population.

Most of the centers contacted are located in urban areas. It is



not surprising, therefore, that most of the respondents were residents of cities (40%) or suburban areas (42%); however, 16% lived in small towns and 2% lived in rural areas.

Most of the women in this group (97%) have children, with the majority of these (70%) having between two and four children; the mean number of children is 2.7.

Almost all of the women (98%) have been primarily homemakers (defined as "not regularly employed for pay outside the home") for a number of years. Nine percent had spent 1-5 years, 23% had spent 6-10 years, 17% had spent 11-15 years, 22% had spent 16-20 years, 22% had spent 21-30 years, and 6% had spent more than 30 years as homemakers. This suggests that the women in this group are either choosing to return to work when their last child starts school (after 6-10 years at home) or are waiting until their children begin to leave the nest (after 16-20 years at home). It is also possible that the timing of these returns indicates periods of stress due to separation or divorce in these years, since statistics show that more marriages fail in the seventh or fifteenth year than at other points.

The level of education completed by the women in this sample is somewhat higher than the national average: 96% had received a high school diploma. Although 32% of these did not continue their formal education beyond high school, 24% had completed some college, 4% held a technical or associate degree, 28% had earned a bachelor's degree, and 8% had pursued graduate education or been awarded a graduate degree.

### Women's Life Experiences

The findings of this survey (more fully described in Ekstrom, Beier, Davis, & Gruenberg, in press) confirmed the belief that, through their life experiences, adult women develop a wide variety of skills that are relevant to employment and to education. The women responded to questions about their involvement in activities using the scale: 3 = frequently/regularly; 2 = occasionally; 1 = rarely; 0 = never.

Homemaking Activities: Since the respondents had spent an average of 16 years during which their primary occupation was that of homemaker, many of them had done most of the 30 homemaking activities listed. While only one task--evaluating and purchasing food--had been done frequently by all of these women, all of the respondents had, at some time, cooked and baked, maintained and cared for clothing, provided for family health and safety, managed money, and planned vacations, travel, and recreation.

Over 90% of the women also reported that they frequently engaged in 13 of the remaining homemaking activities, including evaluating and purchasing textile items, furniture, and appliances, and home budgeting and financial record keeping.

It is interesting to note that even though the "nontraditional" homemaking activities listed were performed less frequently, 73% of the women reported that they had supervised automobile maintenance, and 40% had made automobile repairs; 86% had wallpapered, painted, or set tile; 84% had finished or refinished furniture; 49% had done

carpentry or construction; 49% had made electrical repairs; and 46% had made plumbing repairs.

In a free-response section, the women were asked to list their other homemaking activities. In addition to more traditional pursuits, such as mending clothing and raising vegetables, the respondents reported having followed up on insurance claims, exterminated vermin, framed pictures, built fences, assisted in putting in a plumbing system, and chopped wood and used it to make fires or stoke a furnace.

Parenting Activities. The majority of the respondents had, at some time, done all of the 21 parenting activities listed. The two activities most often reported as having been done frequently were supervising a child and listening to and advising a child. Ninety-five percent or more of the respondents had also, at some time, performed 12 of the remaining parenting activities, including providing appropriate and consistent discipline, determining the appropriate level of independence or restriction for an adolescent, and evaluating educational institutions and providing for a child's schooling.

Parenting activities most frequently reported in the free-response section included transporting children to activities and supervising sports or cultural activities for children.

Volunteer Work and Community Service. These women had extensive experience in volunteer work and community service. Of the 90 activities listed in this section, three were reported as having been done frequently or occasionally by more than one-half of the women. These activities-- which had also been done at some time by 70% or more of the respondents--

were: doing quantity cooking and baking, referring others to sources of information and assistance, and responding to telephone requests for information.

More than 50% of the women reported having, at some time, been involved in 18 of the remaining volunteer work and community service activities, such as door-to-door or telephone fund raising, holding elective office in an organization, and individual counseling or tutoring of children/adolescents/adults.

Other volunteer work and community service activities, reported in the free-response section, included volunteering in or working with a cooperative nursery school, working for a bail project, reading to or recording for the blind, editing a dictionary, working in hospital admissions, and being a radio announcer.

Recreation and Hobbies. More than one-half of the women in this sample reported that they had frequently or occasionally taken part in eight of the 35 recreational activities and hobbies listed, including individual sports, interior design, and gourmet/international cooking. Over one-half had also, at some time, participated in eight of the remaining recreational activities and hobbies, such as games of strategy, furniture building/repairing/refinishing, and camping and backpacking.

When asked to list any other recreational activities or hobbies they engaged in, reading, dancing, and belonging to environmental groups were mentioned most frequently.

Educational Activities. Many of the women who responded to this

questionnaire had participated in either formal or nonformal educational activities while they were homemakers.

Formal educational activities were reported in a variety of fields. Over 70% of the women had, at some time, studied about another country. A number of women were also involved in the study, maintenance, or use of a foreign language, most often French or Spanish. Thirty-seven percent reported learning or maintaining another language, and 13% had attained a level of proficiency that enabled them to translate material from another language into English.

Thirty-two percent of the women in this sample had taken courses in both the social sciences (such as psychology and sociology) and the humanities (such as literature and music); 25% had studied the physical sciences (such as mathematics and physics); and 24% had studied the biological sciences (such as botany and biology). Formal courses in crafts involved 49% of the women.

Self-motivated informal education involving reading and studying in the social sciences was reported by 42% of the women; in the humanities by 41%; in the biological sciences by 29%; and in the physical sciences by 27% of the women in the sample.

Informal education in groups was also extensive: 43% had belonged to a self-enrichment group, 31% to a self-help group, and 29% had belonged to a study group, most often a Bible study group or a literary club.

Studying local or public issues was the activity most frequently mentioned in the free-response section.

Paid Work Experiences. The 20 categories of paid work experience listed in this questionnaire were selected because they included jobs related to the Project ACCESS occupations and training programs or jobs that have, in the past, attracted large numbers of women workers.

Ninety-eight percent of the women in this sample had, at some time, held paid jobs. The areas in which the largest number of women had frequent/occasional experience were secretarial (48%), retail sales (40%), bookkeeping (31%), and teaching (22%). In addition, 20% or more of the respondents had, at some time, been employed as cooks, waitresses, factory workers, social workers, and in household service. As expected, few women had held nontraditional jobs, although 3% reported having worked in construction, 5% in mechanical or repair, and 12% in scientific or technical fields.

In the free-response section, where the women could list other types of paid work they had done, child care was most frequently mentioned, followed by telephone/switchboard operator, cashier, real estate sales agent, and teacher's aide. But an impressive variety of other paid jobs had been held by these women: this group of respondents included a Navy recruiter, a law librarian, a security guard, a TV broadcaster, a croupier, a taxi driver, an upholsterer, a traffic supervisor, and a pharmacist. Teaching and/or selling crafts was reported by several women, and three of the women reported having owned their own businesses.

Self-evaluation of Competence. Because one purpose of this survey was to identify the kinds of life experience learning that could be

transferred to paid employment and vocational education programs, this section was included in the questionnaire to determine the types of skills that women develop experientially and to find out how the women surveyed would rate themselves in each skill area.

The 28 occupationally-transferable skills that comprised this section included those most frequently listed in the worker trait group qualification profiles in the Dictionary of Occupational Titles (as adapted from Table 5 of Sjogren, 1977) and those that were expected to be relevant for the Project ACCESS occupations and vocational education programs. The response scale used in the self-rating section was: 3 = I do this very well; 2 = I do this fairly well; 1 = I do not do this well; 0 = I cannot/do not do this at all.

Table 1 presents the women's self-ratings of competence in 28 skills. As can be seen, the largest percentage of women reported that they could take responsibility "very well." Other skills that the majority of women also rated "very well" were: help others, deal with people, adjust schedule to a variety of unexpected changes, be self-directed, evaluate a product using one's own standards, analyze a problem, and interpret the feelings, ideas, and opinions of others. In general, the women in this sample appeared to have fairly good self-images, as indicated by the majority who reported that they did most of the things listed "very well" or "fairly well."

It is interesting to note that, in this section, 24% of the women assigned a rating of "not very well" and 30% of "not at all" to their ability to do fund raising, while responses from the section on

volunteer work and community service showed that 60% had done door-to-door fund raising, 57% had raised funds by telephone, 42% had coordinated a fund raising campaign, 41% had written fund raising letters, and 40% had developed a fund raising campaign.

In addition, 44% of the women rated their ability to do computations and arithmetic "not very well" or "not at all," while in the section on paid work experiences, 44% of the sample reported that they had, at some time, held paid jobs as bookkeepers and 12% had worked as bank clerks.

Such inconsistencies might indicate that the women in this sample took part in these activities even though they doubted their competence, but it is also possible that the self-ratings of these women may be underestimates of their true ability. The latter explanation is consistent with other evidence that re-entry women tend to undervalue their own abilities.

The following case study, from the field test report of Project ACCESS (Ekstrom, in preparation), illustrates the differences between one woman's self-ratings of ability and her employer's ratings of her performance:

W.S., a 52-year-old black woman, had been a homemaker for 29 years. In 1980 she entered Project ACCESS because she felt the need for increased family income. W.S. had not completed high school but she had earned a high school equivalency certificate (GED) in 1976. Her only previous paid work experience was as a checker in a dry cleaning store during the 1940's. When W.S. completed the Project ACCESS Experience Description Summary [a self-assessment instrument comprising abilities relevant to 11 occupational clusters], her highest score (2.72) was on the scale of skills for bank clerk/teller. W.S. is now employed as a bank clerk. W.S.'s employer rated



her on the same skills listed in the Experience Description Summary; most of these ratings were above average (mean = 2.86). W.S.'s self-ratings and her employer's evaluation were in agreement 43% of the time; 43% of the time W.S. rated herself lower than did her employer; and 14% of the time W.S. rated herself more highly than did her employer.

#### Employer Questionnaires

Based on information from the employer questionnaires, mean ratings for each skill were computed for nine of the 11 Project ACCESS occupations; there were insufficient personnel worker and social service aide responses to permit meaningful analysis.

#### Occupational Transferability Estimates

Table 2 presents the transferability analysis for the Project ACCESS employment component. Using the skills listed in the Women's Questionnaire, this analysis compares the women's self-ratings of competence with the employers' questionnaire response ratings of the importance of these skills in selecting new employees. The skills are presented in order of the women's self-ratings. A mean employer rating of 1.5 or higher indicates that employees with this skill are expected to give average or superior job performance; a columnar dash indicates that the skill was not relevant to or not asked about for that occupation. It should be noted that a confidence limit of  $\pm .5$  was used to determine whether sets of ratings were similar--if the ratings fell within this range, they were considered similar.

In comparing the women's self-ratings with the employers' ratings for each skill, it can be seen that the women's mean self-ratings for ten of the 22 skills (indicated by asterisks) met or exceeded the employers' mean ratings for all occupations.

For five of the skills (items 2, 7, 14, 18, and 21), although the women's self-ratings did not reach those of the employers, for no occupation did the difference between the ratings exceed .5.

For each of the remaining skills (items 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 19), the differences between the women's self-rating and the employers' selection rating exceeded .5 for only one of the nine occupations. In each of these cases the employers' rating of the skill was very high, reflecting the importance of the skill in that particular occupation. For example, Item 8--Do precise and accurate detailed work, for which the women's self-rating was 2.3, received a rating of 3.0 from employers of electronics assemblers. In contrast, this skill received a rating of only 1.4 from employers of airline reservation agents.

Examination of the women's skill self-ratings in relation to the specific occupations shows that (within the  $\pm .5$  confidence limit) the average woman rated herself as having all of the skills employers rated as necessary for average or superior performance as a beginning airline reservation agent, bank clerk/teller, credit/collection worker, home health aide, or photo lab technician. In addition, the average woman had all but one of the skills necessary for average or superior performance as a beginning floral designer or insurance sales agent, and all but two of the skills rated as necessary for average or superior performance as a beginning electronics assembler. Finally, the average woman had all but three of the skills rated as necessary for average or superior performance as a beginning claims adjuster.

### Educator Questionnaires

When the educator questionnaires were returned, several of the vocational educators had reported that the selection ratings were of minimal importance, since their program's philosophy was to accept all applicants and then to provide them with the educational experiences necessary to reach the criteria required to pass the course. It is not surprising, then, that relatively few of the skills received the high ratings that would identify them as being important in selecting new students. In contrast, many more of the skills received high ratings for their utility in awarding advanced placement or course exemption. Therefore, it was decided to focus the vocational education transferability analysis on the advanced placement ratings.

Based on information from the educator questionnaires, mean ratings for each skill were computed for six of the nine Project ACCESS vocational education programs; there were insufficient responses from the computer programming, graphic arts/lithography, and welding programs to permit meaningful analysis.

### Vocational Education Transferability Estimates

Table 3 presents the transferability analysis for the Project ACCESS vocational education component. Using the skills listed in the Women's Questionnaire, this analysis compares the women's self-ratings of competence with the vocational educators' questionnaire response ratings of the importance of these skills in awarding advanced placement. The skills are presented in order of the women's self-ratings. A mean educator placement rating of 1.5 or higher indicates that students with this skill

could be expected to receive advanced placement or course exemption; a columnar dash indicates that the skill was not relevant to or not asked about for that program. It should be noted that a confidence limit of  $\pm .5$  was used to determine whether sets of ratings were similar--if the ratings fell within this range, they were considered similar.

In comparing the women's self-ratings with the educators' ratings for each skill, it can be seen that the women's mean self-ratings for four of the 24 skills (indicated by asterisks) met or exceeded the educators' mean ratings for all programs.

For 11 of the skills (items 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 14, 16, 17, and 21), although the women's self-ratings did not reach those of the educators, for no program did the difference between ratings exceed .5.

For each of the remaining skills (items 9, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 22, 23, and 24), the differences between the women's self-rating and the educators' placement rating exceeded .5 for only one of the six programs. In each of these cases, the educators' rating of the skill was very high, reflecting the importance of the skill in that particular program. For example, Item 9--Use oral communication skills, for which the women's self-rating was 2.4, received a rating of 3.0 from educators in occupational therapy. In contrast, this skill received a rating of only 1.7 from educators in medical records technology.

Examination of the women's skill self-ratings in relation to the specific vocational education programs shows that (within the  $\pm .5$  confidence limit) the average woman rated herself as having all of the skills educators rated as necessary for advanced placement or course

exemption in drafting and respiratory therapy programs. In addition, the average woman had all but one of the skills necessary for advanced placement or course exemption in library technology and medical records technology programs, and all but two of the skills necessary for advanced placement or course exemption in a cook/chef program. Finally, the average woman had about one-half of the skills necessary for advanced placement or course exemption in an occupational therapy program.

#### DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

One question addressed by this research was whether women make career decisions based on their skills, or if they select careers they believe to be sex-appropriate. If women choose careers on the basis of their skills, one would expect to find a high correlation between the ranking of occupations by the women's skills and the percentage of women actually working in these occupations. This did not occur.

The women's skills ranking for direct-entry jobs ranged from a high of 2.34 for bank clerk/teller--an occupation which is over 90% female--to a low of 1.65 for electronics assembler--an occupation which is 52% female. The women rated themselves more highly for skills required by photo lab technicians--of whom 50% are female--than for skills required by home health aides--of whom 86% are female. Thus, it can be concluded that, in the past, women have not made occupational decisions based on their skills.

Some women's life experiences better prepare them for the less traditional, higher paying jobs that require technical skills. In general, however, women tend to develop their interpersonal skills and their verbal ability at the expense of their technical and mechanical skills and their

mathematical reasoning ability. Since interpersonal skills are more frequently utilized in the more traditional, lower salaried, and sex-stereotyped jobs, women will often select these jobs rather than those requiring technical skills.

It was encouraging to find that so many of the women in this sample had engaged in activities that are considered "nontraditional" for women, such as wallpapering and painting, refinishing furniture, and making electrical and plumbing repairs. These kinds of activities can be the key to identifying women who have the potential for success in construction, mechanical, and repair occupations and training programs.

When homemakers' skills are assessed objectively, the unavoidable conclusion is that these skills have been greatly underrated. As homemakers, the women in this sample assumed responsibility for the welfare of their families and their communities, while spending their "free" time developing advanced skills and new areas of expertise. The achievements of these women are impressive, running the gamut from responding to the needs of their families to helping to improve the quality of life in their communities, from translating foreign language materials into English to making automobile repairs. To discount such achievements as "trivial" and "involving little significant learning" is short-sighted, since the abilities of women like these comprise a resource that can benefit the very society which has denied them occupational and educational opportunity.

The results of this study confirmed the basic hypothesis that adult women have a wide variety of life experiences through which they acquire skills and knowledge relevant to employment and to vocational education.

It can be concluded that the experientially-developed skills of the women in this sample are transferable to the Project ACCESS occupations and vocational education programs. The findings of this study underscore the importance of recognizing life experience learning and the potential usefulness of self-ratings of competence when selecting women for jobs and educational programs.

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FOOTNOTE

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Table 1

Women's Self-Ratings of Competence

<u>Ability to:</u>	Percentage			
	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Fairly well</u>	<u>Not very well</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
Take responsibility	75	23	2	0
Help others	63	35	2	0
Deal with people	61	36	3	0
Adjust schedule to a variety of unexpected changes	61	31	8	0
Be self-directed	57	39	4	0
Evaluate a product using one's own standards	55	43	1	1
Analyze a problem	52	43	5	0
Interpret the feelings, ideas, and opinions of others	51	47	2	0
Use oral communication skills	49	46	5	0
Do precise and accurate detailed work	48	40	10	2
Coordinate an activity	40	51	9	0
Make decisions	39	52	9	0
Compile information	39	50	10	1
Do problem solving	38	53	8	1
Work under stress	38	50	10	2
Do a repetitive task following set procedures	37	43	18	2

Table 1

Women's Self-Ratings of Competence (continued)

<u>Ability to:</u>	Percentage			
	<u>Very well</u>	<u>Fairly well</u>	<u>Not very well</u>	<u>Not at all</u>
Instruct others	36	54	9	1
Evaluate a product using someone else's guidelines	35	51	12	2
Direct, control, and plan activities	35	47	15	3
Write clearly and understandably	34	40	22	4
Negotiate between two or more people/groups	32	51	13	4
Supervise others	29	58	11	2
Influence others	27	58	14	1
Persuade others	25	59	14	2
Manage others	20	58	17	5
Sell a product or service	20	45	23	12
Do computations and arithmetic	17	39	36	8
Do fund raising	15	31	24	30

Table 2: Transferability Analysis -  
Employment Component

Employers' Mean Selection Ratings

Ability to:	Women's mean self-rating	Employers' Mean Selection Ratings								
		Airline Reservations	Bank Clerk/Teller	Claims Adjuster	Credit/Collections	Electronics Assembler	Floral Designer	Home Health Aide	Insurance Sales	Photo Lab Technician
1. Take responsibility	*2.6	-	1.6	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.3
2. Deal with customers or other people	2.6	1.8	2.7	-	1.5	-	2.5	-	2.3	-
3. Adjust schedule to a variety of unexpected changes	*2.5	1.5	-	2.0	-	-	-	1.7	1.6	-
4. Be self-directed	*2.5	-	1.4	-	2.4	-	-	2.0	2.5	-
5. Analyze a problem	*2.5	-	-	-	1.5	-	-	-	1.8	-
6. Interpret the feelings, ideas, and opinions of others	*2.5	-	-	1.5	-	-	-	1.8	2.4	-
7. Use oral communication skills	2.4	1.6	-	1.5	-	-	-	-	2.5	-
8. Do precise and accurate detailed work	2.3	1.4	-	2.5	-	3.0	-	-	-	2.7
9. Compile information	2.3	-	-	3.0	1.0	-	-	-	-	-
10. Do problem solving	2.3	1.8	-	3.0	-	-	-	-	-	-
11. Instruct others	*2.3	-	-	2.0	0.8	1.0	1.0	1.7	1.5	1.4

\*Women's mean self-rating met or exceeded all employers' mean selection ratings.

Table 2: Transferability Analysis -  
Employment Component  
(continued)

Employers' Mean Selection Ratings

Ability to:	Women's mean self-rating	Airline Reservations	Bank Clerk/Teller	Claims Adjuster	Credit/Collections	Electronics Assembler	Floral Designer	Home Health Aide	Insurance Sales	Photo Lab Technician
12. Work under stress	2.2	-	1.6	2.5	1.5	-	3.0	2.0	2.0	-
13. Do a repetitive task following set procedures	2.2	1.2	1.6	2.5	-	3.0	2.5	-	-	1.8
14. Evaluate a product using someone else's guidelines	2.2	-	-	-	-	-	1.0	-	-	2.4
15. Direct, control, and plan activities	*2.1	2.0	-	-	-	-	-	1.6	-	-
16. Negotiate between two or more people/groups	2.1	-	-	3.0	1.6	-	-	1.8	1.8	-
17. Supervise others	*2.1	-	-	-	0.8	0.0	1.5	1.8	1.5	1.6
18. Persuade others	*2.1	2.3	-	-	1.0	-	1.5	-	2.3	-
19. Influence others	1.9	-	-	1.5	1.5	-	-	1.4	2.6	-
20. Sell a product or service	*1.7	1.6	-	-	-	-	1.0	-	0.8	-
21. Do computations and arithmetic	1.7	1.8	1.8	2.0	-	1.5	-	-	1.8	1.7
22. Do fund raising	*1.3	-	-	-	0.4	-	-	-	0.4	-

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\*Women's mean self-rating met or exceeded all employers' mean selection ratings.

Table 3: Transferability Analysis -  
Vocational Education  
Component

Vocational Educators' Mean Placement Ratings

Ability to:	Women's mean self-rating	Cook/Chef	Drafting	Library Technology	Medical Records Technology	Occupational Therapy	Respiratory Therapy
1. Show compassion	*2.8	-	-	-	0.8	2.5	2.7
2. Take responsibility	*2.6	-	-	-	2.5	-	-
3. Deal with people	2.6	1.5	-	3.0	-	-	2.7
4. Follow orders and accept supervision	2.6	-	2.8	2.3	2.5	2.5	2.7
5. Carry out written and written directions	2.6	-	-	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.0
6. Evaluate a product/information	2.5	2.8	-	2.7	-	-	-
7. Adjust schedule to a variety of unexpected changes	2.5	3.0	-	-	-	-	-
8. Analyze a problem	2.5	-	2.8	-	-	-	-
9. Use oral communication skills	2.4	-	-	-	1.7	3.0	2.7
10. Do precise and accurate detailed work	2.3	-	2.8	2.7	2.8	-	2.3
11. Compile information	2.3	-	-	3.0	2.2	-	-
12. Do problem solving	2.3	-	-	-	2.2	3.0	2.0

\*Women's mean self rating met or exceeded all vocational educators' mean program ratings.

Table 3: Transferability Analysis -  
Vocational Education  
Component (continued)

Vocational Educators' Mean Placement Ratings

Ability to:	Women's mean self-rating	Cook/Chef	Drafting	Library Technology	Medical Records Technology	Occupational Therapy	Respiratory Therapy
13. Instruct others	2.3	-	-	2.7	1.5	3.0	-
14. Coordinate an activity	2.3	2.5	-	-	-	-	-
15. Work under stress	2.2	3.0	-	-	-	-	2.3
16. Do a repetitive task following set procedures	2.2	-	2.0	2.3	1.8	-	-
17. Establish rapport	2.2	-	-	-	1.5	2.5	1.8
18. Obtain and verify information	2.2	-	-	2.7	2.2	3.0	-
19. Direct, control, and plan activities	*2.1	2.0	-	-	-	-	-
20. Negotiate between two or more people/groups	*2.1	-	-	-	1.2	-	-
21. Supervise others	2.1	2.2	-	-	1.5	-	-
22. Use writing skills	2.1	-	-	-	1.7	3.0	-
23. Manage others	1.9	-	-	1.5	2.5	-	-
24. Do computations and arithmetic	1.7	2.5	-	-	-	-	-

\*Women's mean self-rating met or exceeded all vocational educators' mean program ratings.