

ED 404 463

CE 073 394

TITLE Knowledge of Nontraditional Careers Increases.
 INSTITUTION Montclair State Univ., Upper Montclair, NJ. Career Equity Assistance Center for Research and Evaluation.
 SPONS AGENCY New Jersey State Dept. of Education, Trenton. Office of Bilingual Education and Equity Issues.
 PUB DATE 96
 NOTE 6p.
 PUB TYPE Collected Works - Serials (022)
 JOURNAL CIT New Jersey Research Bulletin; n17 Spr 1996.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
 DESCRIPTORS Adult Education; Adult Programs; Comparative Analysis; *Displaced Homemakers; Improvement; *Knowledge Level; *Nontraditional Occupations; *One Parent Family; *Outcomes of Education; Pretests Posttests; Program Effectiveness; Sex Fairness; State Surveys; Vocational Education
 IDENTIFIERS Carl D Perkins Voc and Appl Techn Educ Act 1990; Knowledge Development; *New Jersey

ABSTRACT

In 1996, the effectiveness of New Jersey's Perkins Act-funded single parent/displaced homemaker and gender equity programs in increasing clients' knowledge of nontraditional careers was evaluated through a 60-question survey that was administered to all clients before each program began and 6 weeks after completion of those portions of the programs pertaining to nontraditional careers. Matched pretest and posttest scores were obtained from 1,061 program participants (of whom 95.3% were female, 45.2% were Caucasian, 39.3% were Black, and 11.9% were Hispanic). The participants ranged in age from 14 to over 46 years old. Mean scores for all respondents were significantly higher on the posttest than on the pretest (35.6 versus 29.6). The mean pretest and posttest scores for all programs were 29.6 and 34.6 respectively. Both males and females demonstrated significant score increases on the posttest. Mean posttest scores were significantly higher for all age ranges analyzed except for the 14-15 age range. With the exception of individuals who classified themselves as Native American, all ethnic/racial groups demonstrated significantly higher scores on the posttest than on the pretest. The evaluation confirmed the results of the 1995 evaluation. In both years, the youngest program participants had the least knowledge of nontraditional careers. (MN)

 * Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
 * from the original document. *

**KNOWLEDGE OF NONTRADITIONAL CAREERS INCREASES
RESEARCH BULLETIN NO. 17**

**CAREER EQUITY ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

J. Cote-Bonanno

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

5073394
ERIC
Full Text Provided by ERIC



RESEARCH BULLETIN

NEW JERSEY CAREER EQUITY ASSISTANCE CENTER FOR RESEARCH AND EVALUATION

Spring, 1996

LIFE SKILLS CENTER, MONTCLAIR STATE UNIVERSITY

Research Bulletin No. 17

Knowledge of Nontraditional Careers Increases

Joan D. Bernstein, Ed.D.

Project Director

Joanne Coté-Bonanno, Ph.D.

Project Director

Linda B. Reilly, Ph.D.

Principal Investigator

Jerry Carver, M.A.

Project Coordinator

Marjorie E. Doremus, Ph.D.

Project Coordinator

During Program Year 1996, single parent/ displaced homemaker and sex equity programs funded through the Carl D. Perkins Act in New Jersey conducted a series of evaluations designed to assess the effect of program participation on participants. The results of these evaluations were analyzed independently by the Career Equity Assistance Center for Research and Evaluation at Montclair State University (CEAC). This bulletin represents one in a series of four reports on test results obtained during Program Year 1996. Other bulletins present results of testing for self esteem, equity standards and sex role attitudes.

PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS INCREASE KNOWLEDGE OF NONTRADITIONAL CAREERS

Projects for single parents/displaced homemakers that are funded under the federal Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, P.L. 101-392, are required to provide marketable skills training in areas which produce economic self-sufficiency. Lack of knowledge about careers limits entry into occupations which could be both personally and financially rewarding to females.

This study evaluated the changes in knowledge concerning nontraditional careers of participants in projects funded by the Perkins sex equity set aside funds. These projects in New Jersey are administered by the Office of Bilingual Education and Equity Issues of the New Jersey Department of Education.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A career is defined as nontraditional for a gender if it is dominated by 75 percent or more of the other gender. According to *Women and Nontraditional Work* (1993), only about 7 percent of all working women were employed in nontraditional occupations in 1992. The Institute for Women's Leadership (1993) reported that in 1990, 68% of New Jersey women worked in gender-segregated clerical, service and sales jobs, earning less, with fewer benefits, status and security than if employed in "men's" jobs.

In New Jersey, women continue to be concentrated in low wage jobs. Women account for 67.2% of all low wage workers. Of the females in the work force, 54.5% held low wage jobs compared to 29% low wage earners in the male work

force (Life Skills Center, 1992). Women working in nontraditional jobs typically earn 20 - 30 percent more than women in traditional occupations, but earn less than men in the same occupation (*Women and Nontraditional Work*, 1993).

Bayne and Gerber (1990) identified the following barriers to nontraditional occupations: the influence of family/friends, low occupational self-concept, lack of money for educational preparation, role conflict, fear of success or failure and lack of role models or information.

In a previous study, Bernstein, Reilly and Coté-Bonanno (1992) found that knowledge about nontraditional careers was significantly related to age, type of school, parental status, marital status, race, mother's occupation and father's occupation. Students in the 20 year age category had a lower level of knowledge concerning nontraditional careers than any other age group.

A strong relationship was found between knowledge about nontraditional careers and attitudes toward these careers (Bernstein, Reilly and Coté-Bonanno, 1992). Students who were most knowledgeable were also most likely to have positive attitudes concerning the suitability of nontraditional careers for either gender.

Previous evaluations of displaced homemaker and sex equity programs in New Jersey funded through the Perkins Act have shown that participants increased their knowledge of nontraditional careers significantly as a result of program participation (Bernstein, Coté-Bonanno, Reilly, Carver and Doremus, 1995). The in-

crease in knowledge concerning technical careers was significant for both males and females, for participants who classified themselves as Black, Hispanic or Other and for six of the ten age ranges analyzed.

METHOD OF STUDY

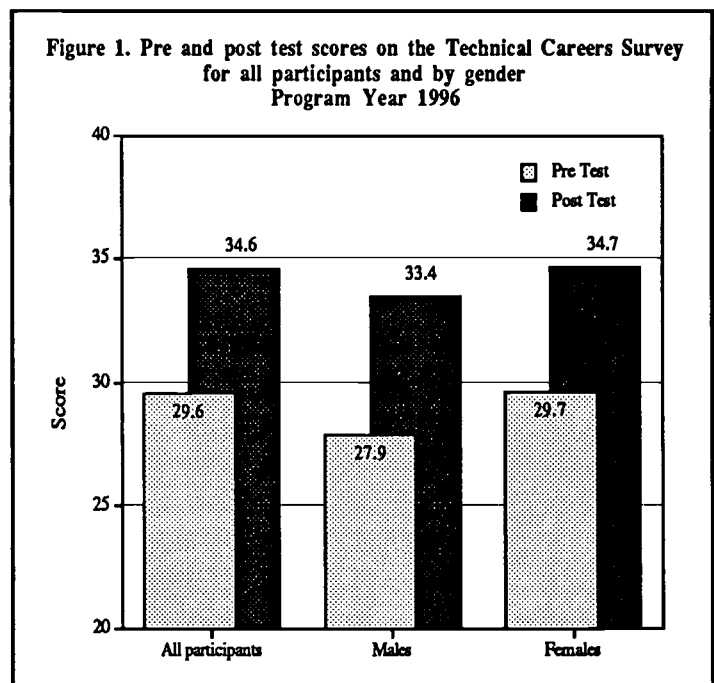
Data was collected from participants enrolled in single parent/displaced homemaker and sex equity programs throughout New Jersey during the 1996 program year. The Technical Careers Survey was developed specifically for use in these programs in New Jersey. The survey consists of a set of 3 questions pertaining to training, wages and gender suitability for each of 20 occupations. All 60 questions were scored together to produce a single score. Matched pre and post tests were collected from 1061 program participants.

Program personnel administered both pre and post tests. Pre tests were administered prior to the beginning of any program. Post tests were administered 6 weeks after the completion of that part of the program pertaining to nontraditional careers. Tests were scored by program personnel. Total scores were forwarded for analysis to the Career Equity Assistance Center for Research and Evaluation at Montclair State University.

FINDINGS

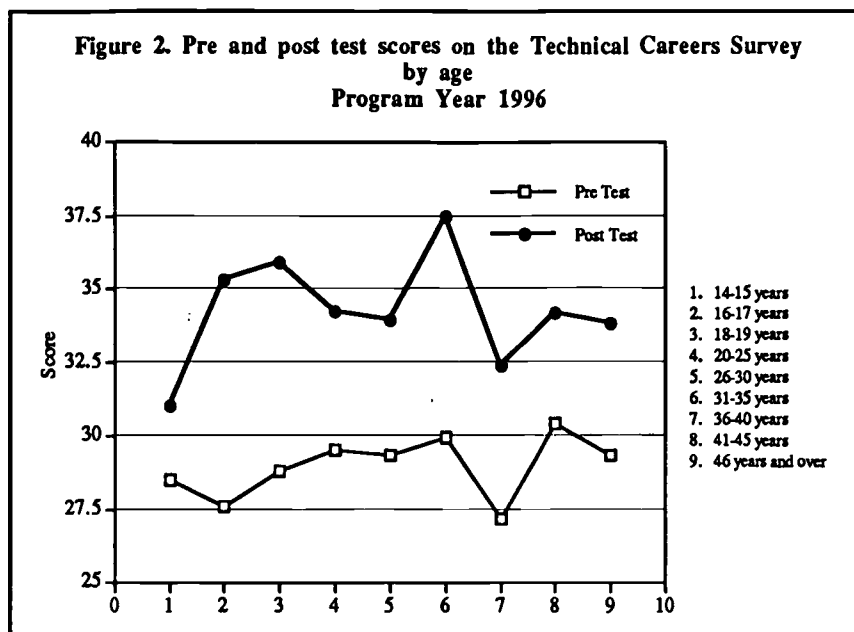
The majority of the sample (95.3%) were females. Clients ranged in age from 14 years to over 46 years of age. The largest percentage of the respondents, 74.0 percent, were between 20 and 40 years of age. The largest portion of the respondents, 45.2 percent, classified themselves as Caucasian. The second and third largest groups classified themselves as Black, 39.3 percent, and as Hispanic, 11.9 percent.

Mean scores for all respondents were significantly higher for the post test (M34.6) than for the pre test (M29.6). The mean pre test score for all programs was 49.3 percent correct. The mean post test score for all schools



was equal to 57.7 percent correct on the Technical Careers Survey.

Mean post test scores were significantly higher than mean pre test



scores for both males and females. Mean pre test scores for males (M27.9) and for females (M29.7) were similar. However, the mean post test score for females (M34.7) was slightly higher than the mean post test score for males (M33.4) reflecting a greater change in knowledge for the females. The average mean post test score for females reflected 58.3 percent correct compared to 55.0 percent correct for males (see Figure 1).

Mean pre test and post test scores were analyzed for two year ranges from 12 years to 19 years of age and for 5 year ranges from 20 to 45 years of age. The mean post test scores were significantly higher than mean pre test scores for all age ranges analyzed except for the participants who were 14 - 15 years of age.

The participants in the 31 - 35 year age range had the highest mean post test score (M37.5). The participants in the 14 - 15 year age range had the lowest mean post test score (M31.0);

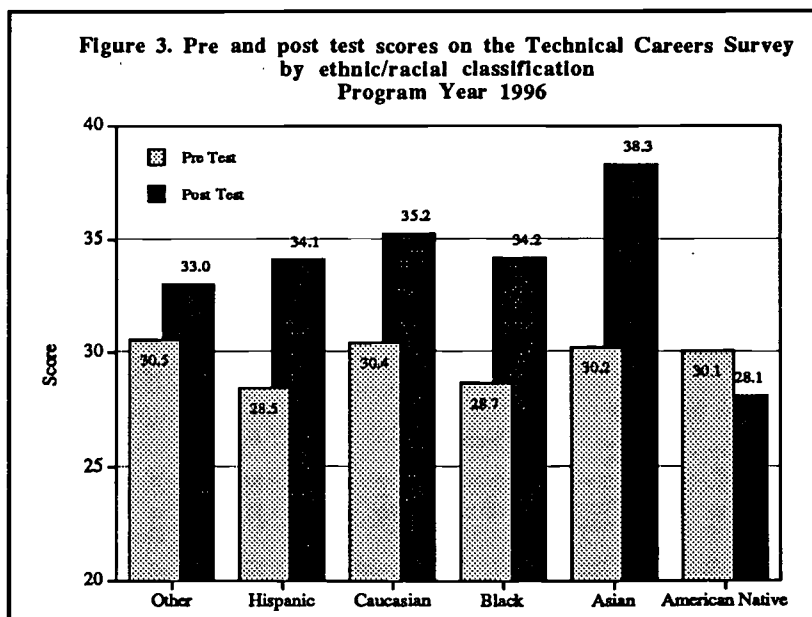
those in the 36 - 40 year age range also had a low mean post test score (M32.4). Mean post test scores for other age groups were between 34 and 36 (see Figure 2).

Mean post test scores were significantly higher for respondents who classified themselves as Asian, Black, Caucasian, Hispanic and Other. Asian respondents had the

highest mean post test score (M38.3) followed by the Caucasian respondents (M35.2). The respondents who classified themselves as Asian had the largest difference between the mean pre test (M30.2) and the mean post test (M38.3). Respondents who classified themselves as Hispanic had the next largest difference (see Figure 3).

DISCUSSION

Participants in the single parent/displaced homemaker and sex equity programs in New Jersey funded through the Perkins sex equity set aside significantly increased knowledge of nontraditional careers as a result of program participation. Increases in knowledge were significant for both genders, for participants in all categories based on parental and marital status, for all ethnic/racial groups except for Native Americans and for all age groups over 15 years of age. These findings confirm the result of the evaluation for program year 1995, which also found significant increases in par-



ticipants across a wide range of demographic variables (Bernstein, et al., 1995).

The mean pre test score for program year 1996, 49.3 percent, was higher than the pre test score reported for program year 1995, but still indicated a low level of knowledge prior to enrollment. In both program year 1995 and 1996, participants in the youngest age ranges had the lowest levels of knowledge prior to program participation. Expanded efforts at this level are necessary to help inform young women before they make initial career choices.

The need for program content that includes information on nontraditional careers for women has been previously stressed by Bayne and Gerber (1990). The relationship between knowledge about nontraditional careers and attitude toward them has been demonstrated (Bernstein, Reilly and Coté-Bonanno, 1992). Students who were most knowledgeable were also most likely to have positive attitudes concerning the suitability of nontraditional careers for either gender.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In New Jersey, the programs funded through the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, P.L. 101-392, sex equity set aside provide a wide range of services to their participants. For a second consecutive program year, these programs have increased the knowledge of the participants concerning nontraditional careers.

Services offered by the single parent/displaced homemaker and sex equity program which address knowledge of nontraditional careers include:

- Saturday workshops that explore nontraditional careers;
- nontraditional role model panels;
- ASETS (Achieving Sex Equity Through Students), student leadership workshops;
- seminars and workshops on exploring career options; and
- New Beginnings Survival Skills curriculum.

While women in this country continue to comprise such a small percentage of nontraditional workers and while women in New Jersey continue to be clustered in low wage occupations, the need for programs such as those funded through the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Applied Technology Education Act, P.L. 101-392, continues. New Jersey's single parent/displaced homemaker and sex equity programs have demonstrated that they increase the knowledge of nontraditional careers across the range of their participants. Continuation and expansion of these programs is of vital importance in the campaign to ensure economic self-sufficiency for women.

Bibliography:

Bayne, G.K, and Gerber, R.N. (1990). *Nontraditional education component in single parent/homemakers programs in the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Final Report: July 1, 1989-September 30, 1990.* Louisville, KY: Louisville University, School of Education.

Bernstein, J. D., Reilly L. B. and Coté-Bonanno, J.F. (1992). *Study to examine student knowledge and attitude toward nontraditional careers.* Upper Montclair, NJ: Montclair State College, Life Skills Center.

Bernstein, J.D., Coté-Bonanno, J.F., Reilly, L.B., Carver, J. and Doremus, M.E. (1995). *Technical Careers: Changes in levels of knowledge.* Research Bulletin No. 11. Upper Montclair, NJ: Montclair State University

Institute for Women's Leadership. (1993). *NJ Women count. Boxed in and breaking out: New Jersey women and work in the 1990's.* New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey.

Life Skills Center. (1992). *Low-wage jobs and workers in New Jersey.* (Research Report No. 5.) Upper Montclair, NJ: Montclair State University.

Women and Nontraditional Work. (1993). Washington, D.C.: Wider Opportunities for Women, Inc.

CAREER EQUITY ASSISTANCE

Patricia A. Mitchell, Ph.D.
Gender Equity Coordinator
NJ Department of Education
CN500
Trenton, NJ 08625-0500
(609) 292-659

Training
Trenton State College
Hillwood Lakes
CN 4700,
Trenton, NJ 08650
(609) 771-2816

Research and Evaluation
Montclair State University
Life Skills Center
Upper Montclair, NJ 07043
(201) 655-4172

Marketing and Resources
Middlesex County Vocational
and Technical Schools
618 New Brunswick Ave.
Perth Amboy, NJ 08861
(908) 293-0510



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: Career Equity Assistance Center for Research and Evaluation.
Equity Bulletin NO. 2 and Research Bulletins NO. 10 and 16-22
Author(s): Marjorie E. Doremus, Ph.D, Linda B. Reilly, Ph.D., etc
Corporate Source: Montclair State University
Life Skills Center
Montclair, NJ 07043
Publication Date: 1995-96

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic/optical media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) or other ERIC vendors.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following two options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2 documents



Check here

For Level 1 Release:

Permitting reproduction in microfiche (4" x 6" film) or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic or optical) and paper copy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 1

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN OTHER THAN PAPER COPY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Level 2



Check here

For Level 2 Release:

Permitting reproduction in microfiche (4" x 6" film) or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic or optical), but not in paper copy.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but neither box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic/optical media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here -> please

Signature: Joanne Cote-Bonanno
Printed Name/Position/Title: Joanne Cote-Bonanno, Project Director
Organization/Address: Montclair State University, Life Skills Center, Upper Montclair, NJ 07043
Telephone: (201) 655-7783
FAX: (201) 655-7085
E-Mail Address: Bonanno@saturn.montclair.EDU
Date: 3/11/97