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New Horizons in Adult Education, founded in 1987, is an electronic refereed journal, published quarterly. The journal provides faculty, researchers, graduate students, and practitioners with a venue for publishing their current thinking and research within adult education, human resource development, and related fields. *New Horizons in Adult Education* publishes peer-reviewed articles, Point-Counterpoint essays, Perspectives (on people, practice, research, and teaching) essays, Book and Media Reviews, and News and Notes. The journal retains copyright of individual articles. Any item that appears in *New Horizons in Adult Education* may be retrieved without permission. However, when this material is quoted or reproduced, the author, title of the item, and issues must be cited. The journal is available electronically at: <http://education.fiu.edu/newhorizons> and transmitted to subscribers around the world at no fee through the electronic network, aehrdnet@fiu.edu. To correspond with *New Horizons in Adult Education* send email to: newhorizons@fiu.edu.

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EDITORS' NOTES

We are honored to serve as the new editors for *New Horizons in Adult Education*, beginning with this issue. Since acquiring the journal in May, we have been involved in laying the foundation for what we hope to become a prominent online journal in the field of adult education. At the present, we continue to publish manuscripts that were accepted by the prior editorship, and this will be reflected in this and the next two issues.

We are also pleased to announce that Florida International University is now the home of the Adult Education and Human Resource Development Network (AEHRDNET) listserv, the companion to *New Horizons in Adult Education*. We invite you to test the new site and join the conversations as we dialogue on issues of relevance to the field.

We send a heartfelt "Thank You" to Nancy Gadbow, who served as editor of *New Horizons* from 1992 – 2005 when it was housed at Nova Southeastern University in Florida. Our gratitude also goes to Cheri Harris who managed the listserv and kept the conversations alive. Their dedication and service to the profession will long be remembered.

Mary Alfred and Tonette Rocco, Editors
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THE GENERAL EDUCATION DIPLOMA (GED) AS A SPRINGBOARD TO SUCCESS?: BLACK WOMEN, HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION, AND COMMUNITY VALUES

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Abstract

This study reflects the experiences of four Black women who succeeded in gaining their General Education Diploma. Their experiences in high school are a poignant example of the way in which talented youth are displaced in formal school settings. Their stories of learning to live with a minimum level of education provide the background for the study of their motivation to succeed. The twenty-seven interviews reveal the reasons for dropping out of high school, the situations that led to them returning to school, and the results of them staying on long enough to complete the General Education Diploma. Also, the participants reveal character traits that make their commitment to overcoming obstacles a strong feature of their journey to higher educational credentials. Through the lens of the women's determination to succeed in formal education we are able to understand the formidable odds that they have had to endure as Black, female, and literate in this society.

Black women have struggled for almost four hundred years to establish themselves as exemplary role models in their communities and the wider American society. Soon after slavery ended in the United States, Black female community activists founded schools as part of their effort to enhance the education of women and thereby improve the condition of all Blacks. The three tenets that informed the work of these educators/activists included their concepts of: (a) the moral superiority of women, (b) Black women as entirely responsible for the development of all Blacks, and (c) the expectation that Black women would attend to the needs of their (Black) sisters (Perkins, 1981). Testimonials on womanhood like Anna Julia Cooper's book *A Voice from the South* ([1892] 1976) and presentations of hers at the Hampton Negro Conference in 1899, are indicators of the importance that Black educated women placed on the moral and intellectual development in girls and women in their urban American communities.

These Black female educators, referred to as club women, were important to the transformation of the image of Black women after abolition in 1865. The club women were

determined to erase the stereotype of Black women as licentious because of their historic subjugation to White slave masters (Batker, 1998). The Black teachers translated the philosophy of the “cult of true womanhood” from the White community in an effort to change the material and moral conditions of the newly-freed Black community (Giddings, 1998). Mary McLeod Bethune, an educator and activist, claimed that Black women understood the importance of improving their people’s status through social, civic, and religious activities (Lerner, 1973). Mary Church Terrell, educator and writer, declared the war on immorality and low socio-economic status among Blacks by insisting that the more intelligent and influential Blacks had a responsibility to “uplift those beneath them” (cited in Higginbotham, 1993, p. 206). Nannie Burroughs, school principal and activist, spoke and wrote about the “respectability” of the working-class woman, encouraging club women who were involved in social uplift programs to find the “ordinary, common-sense, spirit filled everyday woman” and involve her in the movement for racial uplift (cited in Higginbotham, 1993, p. 208).

The advent of the abolition of slavery led to a demand for improved educational resources. It was in this national environment of “re-visioning” the future of Black people that the women leaders began organizing schools that gave children the kind of experiences that enabled them to carry out work beyond menial tasks. Reading, writing, and arithmetic were foundation courses for all blacks enrolled as beginning students, regardless of age and former experience. These club women appeared to have displayed through their actions a formidable faith in the potential of Blacks and the promising future that awaited them and the nation. Through their role as activists, these community leaders were able to mobilize forces that transformed the post-slavery population. In their commitment to improving the lot of the Black masses, they exhibited the determination of their forbears to outlive the stigma associated with slavery and the legacy of compromised opportunities for African descendants. Activism in the work of this gathering of sisters represented a militant attitude against the opposing forces of racism, sexism, and classism.

Black Women in the Workforce Today

It is a fact that throughout the course of this country’s history most blacks have lived near or below the poverty line (Farley, 1997). To further exacerbate the situation Black women faced, Critzer (1998) found that their income did not improve significantly as a result of the wealth of a state, the number of women legislators, party competition, or the number of Black state legislators. His study emphasized that any further reduction in state support for affirmative action would represent a continued decrease in income parity for minorities and women. The fact that economic restructuring has discouraged urban industrial development and consequently provided fewer manufacturing jobs for blacks (Wilson, 1980) further demonstrates the lack of opportunities for Black women with low skills.

According to Farley (1997), the odds of minorities being unemployed from 1980-1990 relative to Whites increased significantly compared to previous years. On the other hand, the positive impact of unionization of jobs in manufacturing industries (Grant & Parcel, 1990; Maume, 1985) shows some of the few openings for Black female mobility in an otherwise bleak employment picture. Until 1995, Black women were still only earning 90% of the median

incomes of White women (Farley, 1997). Overall, it seems then, the grim picture for Black women's employment constricts the viability of the pursuit of academic credentials.

Even if Black women could get their foot in the door of a business, a federal commission on the status of women and minorities in the largest private industries reported that the leaders of these businesses held to an unspoken law that kept this group of citizens out of the highest ranking jobs in the country (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). Men and women who did not fit the corporate image of white men, face a glass ceiling constructed to keep them out of the highest levels of decision making. Black women are seldom ever even in the highest echelon of the biggest and most successful corporations in the country.

We need to consider, therefore, (a) the fact that there is a need for the transformation of Black women's labor, presently tied to the structure of the state and economy as well as to features of the racial/gender division of labor (Critzler, 1998; Epstein, 1973), and, (b) the reality of Black women being mostly employed in federal jobs, at lower wages than whites, if not totally unemployed (Beggs, 1995), to understand the context in which Black women might seek higher educational qualifications.

The General Educational Diploma

The General Education Diploma Tests (GEDs) are promoted as a key to opportunities, advancement, further education, and financial rewards. The GED is comprised of five tests which include writing skills, social studies, interpreting literature and the arts, science, and mathematics. The tests are designed to measure the general skills and knowledge usually acquired in a four-year high school program of study. The point of the tests is to look at the student's ability to evaluate, analyze, and then draw conclusions, combined with the capacity to understand and apply information and concepts (American Council on Education, 2002).

Between 1990 and 2000, over three-quarter of a million people took the GED battery of tests. Of those, 500,000 achieved the high school equivalency diploma. Statistics on the high school diplomas awarded in the United States claim that one of seven of these diplomas is based on the successful completion of the battery of tests provided by the GED. Those who take the GED represent a range of backgrounds of experiences: recent high school students, some people who have been out of school for a long time, and others who may be as old as eighty and still pursuing educational training.

In the year 2000, only 1.5% of the adults who did not graduate from high school, attempted the GED tests. Of those people, just 1% earned the high school equivalency credential (American Council on Education, 2002). It is also reported that the number of adults who plan to go on to higher education programs after attaining their diploma has increased 21.4% since 1943. This represents the persistence of GED graduates in the face of the fact that the new passing rate for the GED tests is set at a standard that exceeds the performance of at least 33% of high school seniors. Once the passing rate was increased in North Carolina and Georgia, the number of students who achieved the diploma dropped to 64.8% from its 1996 level of 70.4%.

In Georgia, it is reported that every year 19,000 people graduate with the GED credential. According to Kathy Lee, director of the assessment, evaluation and GED

administration, the GED the test is difficult and only certain people complete it (General Educational Development Testing Service of the American Council on Education, 2002). Advocates of the GED believe that employers view the GED graduate as someone who will persist in efforts to succeed. Since it is possible to redo separate tests in the exam, many of the students who make up the 72% pass rate each year are repeat examinees, which is further proof of their persistence.

The review of the statistics shows that having the GED degree opened doors to further education, in colleges and other settings, and promotions on the job (Baldwin, 1995) and that these graduates earn wages at 8% higher levels per year than high school dropouts.

Further, GED graduates are significantly more likely than dropouts to be in the labor force and to be employed full-time and they are employed at a 5% higher pay rate than dropouts (Boesel, 1998). They are also more frequently in line to receive additional training after earning their credential (Brewer, 1993), and to expect that their wages will grow at a faster rate than dropouts (Murnane, Willett, & Boudett, cited in Brewer, 1993).

Research on the literacy skills attained by GED graduates, compared to high school graduates, shows that people who pass the GED tests demonstrate literacy skills reflecting a level of literacy widely viewed as necessary for social and economic advancement and for exercising the rights and responsibilities of citizenship (Baldwin, Kirsch, Rock, & Yamamoto, 1995). However, the GED process, from the first class to the receipt of the diploma, represents a high school level of cognitive skills, and does not assure that graduates have attained the quality of work habits, perseverance, and organizational socialization that traditional high school students are able to attain at the end of their 861 hours more of core curriculum subject study (Boesel, 1998).

In a report on the reasons that many African Americans do not attend adult literacy programs and the motivations for those that do, Denny (1996) observed that among those who do, "a burning desire within the individual" was usually set ablaze due to an event like "an inability to complete a task, a change in family situation, or observance of how destructive low literacy can be" (p. 16). Another reason cited for the involvement in the adult literacy class is the fact that adult learners want to do things that they see literate people doing with the same level of comfort. Adult learners are also found to be motivated by the possibilities they project for their future, the choices that they perceive in their lives, and their belief in the potential for change in their circumstances (Luttrell, 1997).

The Participants

The four women who participated in this project, C.C., Eve, Maria, and Carmen are all mothers. They have one to five children each and two of them have grandchildren. The women dropped out of school when they were 16. One of them returned to school at 21, and the others returned to school between the ages of 40 and 48. At the time of the interviews, three of the women had jobs and one of them was a housewife who also served as a lay minister at her church. The graduates took different lengths of time to complete their GED training. One woman took two months before attempting and successfully completing the GED tests, while another took two years to complete the tests.

Method

We followed Lincoln and Guba's (1985) recommendations for data analysis i.e. triangulation, prolonged engagement, peer debriefing, member checks, and thick description. The study developed inductively with categories and questions emerging from the data provided by the four women, and then these were refined into focused questions that were used to identify answers that were provided in the transcripts of the women's interviews.

After reading the transcripts of the audio-taped interviews, each member of the research team did preliminary coding based on emerging themes. Using constant comparison (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), each of us compared and discussed our findings and coordinated initial codes. The entire team then re-analyzed data to confirm categories, make final changes, and reach consensus on the titles that would be used to represent the data themes.

Results

The first theme that was encountered in the analysis was the inner drive to improve each woman's circumstances. Carmen was finally able to return to school after thirty-two years away from formal education. The classes offered at the Women's Center were free and therefore, she did not have the restriction of a lack of funds that had kept her out of the classroom for many of the years that she longed to be a student. She also knew that she had to have a GED if she was going to improve her job prospects. As she explained:

I found out that Bible teaching wouldn't get you good jobs. You know, faith is good, but you need some education, that's when I realized that I needed my GED so I would be able to get a better job than I went to. 'Cause I always thought about having a bed and breakfast inn. . . . so I had to go back to school to get some education, and a better foundation.

Maria returned to school after assessing the prospects of her career advancement at the textile mill. Her observation of one woman who had been on the job for some thirty years, helped Maria resolve to do something more with her life. She was also motivated to go back to school after talking with one of her former high school classmates. After all, Maria reasoned, she was an honor roll student when she was in high school and she knew that she had the ability to do the work even if it was six years after her other friends had completed their high school training.

Eve found herself wondering what she had done with her life when she turned forty. She told her sister-in-law that she wanted to go to Literacy, Inc., in order to "freshen up" her skills before taking the GED exam. Behind this plan was the understanding that her husband was older than her, and that he might not always be around to support her. She also wanted to do things with her grandchild and for herself. This need to be independent pushed her out of her comfortable niche and started her on the two-year journey at the GED program.

Since her children were in fourth and fifth grade, C.C. had the feeling that she was not keeping up with their academic advancement. She talked about the need for more literacy training on the job at Grant University where she was a custodian in order to be successful with

her duties. When the literacy classes began on campus, she was among the first students to sign up for the day classes in spite of the fact that she was on the night shift for a long time. C.C. remembered that she was “depressed” about her lack of reading skills, before she began literacy instruction, and the fact that she was not able to understand some of the topics that her children discussed. She wanted to “read a newspaper and understand it” without feeling ashamed about her low literacy level. As C.C. remembered it:

Reality pushes you through the door. . . You wake up one morning and you know [that] you talked about it, you planned on it, but you have yet to do anything about it and you have to give up and put your first foot forward and start to work on it.

The Support System that the Graduates Enjoyed

The second theme that runs through the stories of the GED journey is the kind of support that each woman encountered along the way. Whether it was Maria, who spent one month preparing for the GED, or Eve, who spent two years making up her mind to do the exam, each woman named a list of friends, family and teachers, among the important people in the experience. A short review of the women’s comments shows how different people figured in the success stories.

Maria remembered her number one support in this way: “My dad, I think he was the key to me going back to school because there were times when he would always encourage and he would always say to me, ‘it is not too late’. So I think that he was a big part of it.”

Talking about the class of students at the campus literacy site, C.C. remembered that:

We would all get around a big table and all of us was like on different levels, so we had some people sitting there that didn’t know their colors, that didn’t know their numbers, and the good thing about it [was] that the ones of us who knew a little more than them, would always try to assist them. . . . didn’t want to leave them behind.

Carmen, in reflecting on her support network, talked about her husband’s role in her pursuit of the GED:

He told me that was fine to go back to school. . . took care of the children on holidays when I was in school. He picked them up if they were sick. . . .at one point, I fell and I had to wear a caste. . I could hardly walk but he drove me to school every day ‘cause I had a fit if I didn’t go.

The literacy teachers were also a special part of each woman’s story. Carmen and Maria had particularly close relationships with the women who tutored them before they did the GED tests. Carmen remembered:

Olivia wasn’t only educated, but she had a very understanding heart. She showed so much affection. She loved us into our lesson! She would rebuke us into our lesson, even. That’s why I liked her, because she showed a lot of love and concern. But she was also

firm. If she saw that you were wasting time, she'd hop on top of that desk and say 'I want everybody in here to be quiet.'

Maria reflected about her teacher's influence on her life:

It's just Ann does things and you don't know why but you don't really question because you really know deep down within you that she's doing it for you. And it was just funny, it was funny the relationship we had and to me I'm a better person for Ann. . . . [she] was always there at the door kicking [to make me work].

C.C. recalled that she "had a great teacher who was always there, who not only wanted to know where you've been or where you're going, but where you're coming from, she was always interested in the whole you. And she helped me a lot."

The Motivation that Children Provided to the Graduates

Children played a very important role in the lives of each woman. Maria had one child when she went to Technical College to prepare for the GED. Carmen had five children when she enlisted at the Women's Center. Eve had a grown daughter and one grandchild when she started at Literacy, Inc. C.C. had three children and grandchildren when State University began offering literacy classes to the custodial staff on campus. In three of the cases, the women found themselves trying to keep up with the educational advancement of the children in their lives.

C.C. described how she felt in her statement that "when you see your kids growing up finishing school, going to college, it kind of pushes you to want to go further, you understand what you missed and how it could have been for you." Maria wanted to offer a better life to her child and her brothers and sisters, so she completed her GED in order to set an example to the other siblings. Maria recalled that she "was the oldest [at home]... and I always felt like a bread winner. . . . I did feel an obligation to my siblings in so many ways." She even went on to support her brother's school career by taking a second job "to help send him to college and make sure that he didn't fall away into a textile job, become a member of the credit union, and have a car." She wanted him to realize bigger dreams and did the necessary work to see them come true.

Carmen remembered very clearly that: "When I put my children in school, I realized there was things I know and things I don't know. And I truly love school but I just got out of it [at sixteen years old] and to see what they had to do, the things were so new to me, I wanted to go back to school myself. "In a similar vein, Eve saw her grandchild as one of the main reasons for her ambition to return to school and finish her high school training. As she talked about that transition to school and the GED program she said: "I want to be able to do things for myself. I want to be able to teach my child or my grandkids. I want to be able to help somebody and I can't help anybody until I help myself."

The Quest for a "Better" Life

All the women were pursuing a quest for a better life than they were living at the time that they began the GED journey. Carmen, though a member of her church and a holder of

several certificates from Bible College, wanted to run her own bed and breakfast business. She saw school as one of the necessary steps to achieving her long-held dream. She also understood that she would have to deal with people in her line of work as a businesswoman, and so she set about getting her writing and speaking skills ready for the time when she had to interact with the public. Carmen recalls:

I thought about the [bed and breakfast business]. I said, ‘Well, you have to know how to keep books, and things that I would have to do to run a business.’ I knew that I had to be educated. So I got to thinking about that. I said, ‘I need to go back to school ‘cause I don’t even know how to get started and this was the desire of my heart. I want to go and I want to open up the bed and breakfast inn, but then I say I don’t even know how.’ So that’s what made me encouraged to go back.

Maria heard people say that the GED was a necessary part of the training for securing a job. She took this advice to heart and got enrolled at Literacy, Inc. Even though she said that she was “chicken” and delayed getting the tests done in a timely way, she knew that eventually she was going to make up her mind to do the exam. She did not know that her first job after gaining the GED was going to be as a housekeeper. That fact made it more important to her that she had the certificate and could change her job when the time had arrived in her career. Having the GED was the first step to thinking of herself as a competent person. She remembered how much it meant to her to have the president of Literacy, Inc. praise her in her daily work: while she was still preparing to do the GED.

Eve talked about the impact of her high school friend on her life when she described meeting the woman in the grocery:

She said, ‘Well, I graduated from college.’ And immediately, it felt like a dagger went into my heart. . . .the word college, it just rang in my spirit. . . because she was not one of the brighter kids and I was trying to figure out how did she finish school. And so I think that was like a wake-up call for me.

C.C. explained her quest for literacy training on the job like this:

We would always talk to people that we worked with, like our supervisors and foreman, that this is the university and it should be able to help people that are employees. You should be able to read the chemicals that you use. . . it would prevent accidents from happening because you could read what things are, you don’t have to depend on your memory. . . you can pick it up and you can read the label and you know what you’re using.

The Impact of the GED on the Women’s Sense of Accomplishment

The women talked about the way in which their family, children, and friends figured in their life after the GED was attained. Six themes emerged from the responses to this prompt about life with the GED. The women talked about the change in job status, the impact of the new level of literacy on their children, the reactions of their husbands to the new GED status of their

wives, their new level of confidence in themselves, their philosophy of dealing with people on their jobs, and the future goals in education that they were developing.

C.C. recounted the steps to the promotion from custodian 1 to superintendent on the campus of Grant College. Her description of this new status as a GED graduate ran thus:

I just got another promotion and it makes a difference because there are so many jobs that you can't get that maybe you can do, but you can't get if you don't have a certain paper and that's your GED. Sometimes you be on a job and you can't go any further because you don't have a high school diploma or a GED because that's their requirement and so when I got it, that opened up doors for me that were not open before.

Maria talked about the impact of the decision to do an education degree:

Teaching has been great for me. I love it. I don't know if it's because I'm a parent with six children but I understand that to me teaching is ministry. It's not just a profession. I believe that we have more than a part in the classroom for our children than just giving them information to match. I think we have to be models, role models for all and encouragers, and surrogate parents. . . . I enjoy the sport of teaching, I enjoy the art of teaching, and I enjoy the profession and the ministry of teaching. It's been wonderful.

Carmen reflected on her new approach to public speaking in these terms:

It's a very successful life, and I know that if you prepare yourself you can reach people. And by someone reaching me, it has taught me that I can reach somebody else. And to me I feel like a success and to me what I'm doing now is like a drop in the bucket to what I feel like I'm going to do. I'm just waiting for some more doors to open.

C.C. described this new feeling about her new status as a GED graduate:

You just feel terrific about yourself. You want to do things. You no longer feel that people are looking down on you. But people don't be looking down on you, but it's how you feel inside that makes you feel as though people are looking down on you. And you just have all this self-esteem and you just feel good about yourself and it just makes other people feel good about you, too.

Eve summed up her new attitude in these words:

I'm still learning. . . . life is full of things that you can do better. And I'm open. . . I guess I have an eye for children who remind me of me. In the process, I try to steer them in another way. Not to say that I was a bad child but just to say, that you can see yourself in the children. And so you better understand them. As a result of that, you seek to make a serious difference in their lives. So it's all been, in the end, worth the ride.

Finally, Maria talked about her position at the motel where she was working as a housekeeper:

The GED just gave me the papers that I needed. If I ever decide to leave this job. . . I do have my GED. If I wanted to do some other trade. Right now, like I said, I am happy here, I'm not ready to do any more climbing right now. I intend to be here for a minute. I'm hoping to grow with the company, not always be a housekeeper. So right now my GED is within me, I know I got it, I feel good that I got it.

The Impact of the GED Journey on Family

The impact of the GED on each woman's family is profound. The women talked about how they understood the changes that took place in their families after the GED was achieved. Carmen stated:

So I'm still in school in a sense. So when [the children] sit down I'm there with Math, making sure their problems are correct. . . . Even in English I have to let them know which contraction to use, whether it's we are or we were, or things of that nature. So I'm right there for them even in the evening to help them through their classes.

Eve talked about the success of her three oldest children:

The three older girls have graduated from high school. One is working on a Master's degree in Microbiology, one is a chemical engineer, and one is a sophomore at Grant University. And they are doing very well. And then we have three who are still at home. And again, education is the key. . . .we are really big on education.

The majority of the women talked about the change in attitude of their husbands once they had achieved their GED certificate. Once C.C. got promoted to superintendent status at Grant University, she had to make changes at home. She remembers that at first, her "husband didn't feel too good" about her promotion. She felt that "maybe he thought I would change the person that I am, but now he's fine." She also realizes that:

If I didn't have an understanding husband, it wouldn't be so good because sometimes I have to stay later. And sometimes when you're in charge of something, something comes up, you got to say there and make sure it's okay before you leave. Sometimes I go home and when I get there, I get a call back.

Maria talked about the fact that her husband "went back to school at forty-seven, to get his degree at Grant University and graduate with a degree in Family Theater. She commented that out of her "boo-boo came a lot of good stuff," and her daughters and husband are enjoying the benefits of higher education degrees. It was clear that she was very proud of her husband. She appreciated the fact that he had made a decision to enhance his educational skills and be a role model for the six children that they were raising.

Carmen talked about her plans for a bed and breakfast inn with her husband and had this to say:

He doesn't say a whole lot now, he listens to me. I talk to him about my bread and breakfast inn, he says 'where's the money?' I say 'well, honey, it's not the money at this point, I'm still getting my children in position. . . . I say, but if that's in my future, I will get it. . . . So he hasn't said anything else to me about that, because I just went ahead and answered him and told him how it was. . . .He's there for me usually when I've got a job to do.

Maria commented on her husband's attitude to her by describing his reaction to her evolution: "He just sits back and watches the seed and just lets me grow. Let me spread my wings. The last job I had I only worked part-time, this job is full time so I do more. I pay more bills which makes me feel a lot better [about my role in our home life]." And with this comment she allowed us to see into the window of her soul's determination to steer her own ship as a mother, grandmother, and wife in her own home.

The Philosophical View of the Graduates

As far as their philosophies of dealing with people, each woman had an opinion about the way that people should be treated. Based on their experience of being in difficult situations before, during, and since the GED journey, they had evolved a way of managing interactions with people that focused on the positive aspects of the value of hardship.

C.C. dealt with her custodial staff and supervisors based on the way that she remembered wanting to be treated when she was in their situation. She described her attitude in these words:

It was a scary change [to supervisor] because you've been cleaning and now you got to go supervise these people that you been working with and they do not make it easy, you know. So you have to keep a level head and you have to constantly pray, saying things will be all right and if you treat people right, it works out for you anyway.

She also stated:

Sometimes you have to write people up, which you know is your job and you have to do it. You may not like it, but sometimes you have to do it and you do what you have to do when you have to do it. But you try to let people know that I'm here with you and whatever we're in it together.

Eve talked about her work ethic in this way:

Whatever I do I put my all into it and my thing is anybody that works with me, I want [the workers] to value what they do as much as I value what I do. So my daily job with them is to talk about, instill it in them. And like my boss says, 'I don't worry about nothing when Eve's around because she's got my back.' And I try to be that kind of employee.

In her role as a pastor, Carmen likes to speak to mothers on welfare. She talked about her role in the community as one to "reach out and pull people out." Carmen observed that

There's a lot of people going down in ruts out there in the world, and I been working on them. I been trying to find some candidates, I don't care where they been, they could come from anywhere. . . I was supposed to open a bed and breakfast inn but my heart is in reaching the people out there. . . when I can find people like that, that's where I want to be.

Plans for Further Education

Finally, the women talked about their plans for further education. In each case it was a question of the right timing with regard to caring for their families and jobs. To quote C.C.:

You feel good and it makes you want to go even further once you get [the GED]. And that I haven't found time for yet, but that is what I'm pushing for, some classes to take, because you know that you can learn. I used to feel as though I could not learn. I can't remember. It's a lot of people who have problems remembering things, but it don't mean you can't learn.

Eve explained:

I feel good that I got [the GED], and I find myself lately wanting to take up some kind of class. Maybe not so much a class that I'm graded on, maybe something just to enhance my knowledge of certain things. So I'll probably in the near future look into taking some kind of class. I'm not sure but I do feel like that's probably something I'll end up doing.

Carmen talked about the role that her husband played in her journey to the GED certificate and pointed out that when she "started school [her] husband had to step in more" to help her. Since he "stood by" her in those nine months of study for the GED she wanted to give him a break from taking care of the children and the household before she returned to school. She said:

My husband, he so beautiful, he stuck by me these nine months, he took care of the children, he had food on the table. Now I got to give him a recess, see what I'm saying. He don't want to go through that right now again. And while he's taking a break, I can be spending more time with my children and my household. . . I'm seeing about him for a while cause he hasn't been feeling well.

Eve explained:

I do think that because I completed it, it said this is not a bogus program. It's one that someone can actually accomplish something as a result of it. So I think it was just encouraging for [my nephews] to go and be a part of it and know that if they worked hard, if they gave of themselves, that they were going to get a diploma.

The Women's New Role as Mentors

When the women talk about the way in which the GED experience influences their relationships with others, there is a strong thread of mentorship that presents itself in their stories. Eve states clearly that:

What blesses me more than anything is that it has given me tools to help other people become successful. The daughters, I think of the students who have come through my life. I think there are co-workers who have come into my life and many are still a part of my life. I feel that the GED has set the stage for all that. I try to be a forerunner in the fact that I try to bring people along with me. . . .It made me such a big person that I was able to give back and I feel like had I not received that, I would probably be a very small person that someone would have to pour into me to help.

Carmen talked about other people in her life in this way:

Now I can tell [people] there are goals out there, there's programs out there that you can get involved in. You don't have to reach the same goals as somebody else, but whatever your goal is, whatever it is that you know that you always wanted to do, what you are better at, there's something out there that you can get involved in to achieve that particular goal.

Maria assesses the changes in her attitude to people from a perspective of one who has "grown up." She explained:

I'm a lot more considerate of other people's feelings. So I can learn how to talk with them and not try to hurt them. . . .You don't have to be sad or down or hurting others and I just like to be that person that can reach down and remove the sadness and pull the happiness. People tell me 'oh, you're so crazy, you're so silly,' and that alone makes me feel good because I can make somebody glad.

As far as giving advice to others who may be interested in doing the GED, the women had the opinion that it was up to the individual to find the motivation to do it for themselves. C.C. discussed the issue of pursuing the credential from this perspective:

The GED, it helps me to let me know that whatever I do in life, I got to put me first. It's more important than anything. I have to make sure I'm happy because if I'm not I can't do anything to make anyone else happy. I got to have self-confidence before I can do anything for my kids or my husband. I got to be okay with me.

Carmen remembers advising women about their need to be focused on the GED long before she completed the program. She told one woman at the women's site where she studied:

Put yourself in school, give your whole mind to it. Study real hard, don't look at nobody else, if you find somebody is smarter than you are, the only time you look at them is for courage. Or they might actually help you to understand, but don't let them make you

think that you cannot make it . . . But set your mind to what you are after and you will get there.

Character in the Stories of the Graduates

These women had exhibited the strongest sense of “character” in their philosophy about life. Comments such as those listed below helped us understand that the GED experience could be considered a prism through which we could view the Black community’s love and appreciation for education and its rewards in this society. This trait could be found in quotes like this:

Maria:

College for me, was not for me because I guess maybe I didn’t want to try hard enough or put more in to my job. Because in order to do something it is very important to me whatever I do I put my name on it. And it’s either the best or not at all. And I could not work, which I needed to do, and try to stay in school because it was too time consuming.

Carmen:

And like I told my class before I left, I say it’s not to the swift or the strong, is the one that endures to the end. I said [completing the GED] took me nine months, it’d take you two years, but don’t drop out because when that time is up you’ll be right where I’m at.

Eve:

I went back and because of the GED I was able to move forward and live a dream that probably would not have been possible without it. In addition to being a better parent, it had allowed me to become a professional in my field, a mentor for my students. Because a lot of times I think they feel discouraged, but then there are moments you can share with them about your past experiences and certainly the GED is one I would tap into.

C.C.:

Before I did [the GED] I had to worry about money for bills, money for clothes, money for food. And each time you move up, you get a little more money and it really helps out. You know, when you have come from a mother with three and you’re on public assistance and then you come up to where you don’t need any assistance and then maybe to the point where you maybe can help somebody else along the way, it feels good.

There is also a strong thread of the women’s spirituality as represented in comments about their lives and the struggles that they endured in the journey to their present success. Three of the women’s perspectives are representative of this characteristic:

Eve:

I notice when I read my Bible people are generally older and wiser when He has touched them and given them their insight. So with most of them. I’m waiting for that day. . . . I’ve never been sure but I know one day [what I’m in search of] will come to me.

Carmen:

I told somebody you can tell that man all you want to that your faith is going to get this paid for you, your faith is not. You got to get that man some Lincolns, some Jacksons,

see what I'm saying, and Washingtons. That's five dollar bills and twenty dollar bills and hundred dollar bills. That's what he's looking at to pay your light bill. . . . Sure, get Bible college that's fine, but you got to learn how to function among the people in your world.

Maria:

You teach people in more than one way. It wasn't about a grade point average [with the young students]. It's about showing them that you care and that you believe in them no matter what the circumstances are.

Discussion

The club women of the nineteenth century may have been primarily committed to the uplift of her sisters who were just out of slavery. They did this work under the yoke of severely constrained financial and social circumstances. Today, working under the same constraints, the activist/teacher has to do similar work in her community. The improvement of the chances of children of color in our Eurocentric male-dominated culture is even more urgent because the odds of failure have increased and the support systems continue to be taxed beyond endurance (Edelman cited in Spriggs, 1999).

The work among sisters of the club today is to shore up the shaky scaffolding that is allowing many of our students to fall through the cracks that a neglected infrastructure has allowed for far too long. Club women/teachers/activists must begin to put into action the kind of commitment that Delpit (Kozol, Wells, Delpit, Rose, Fruchter, Kohl, Meier, & Cole, 1997) described in her call to President Clinton on behalf of the less-served children in our society. All of us, Delpit insists in the above cited paper, that the role of educators must be to value, protect and care for all the children because we all can. And it is this philosophy that seems to speak through in the lives of the GED graduates.

What I found to be most striking in the voices of the women who achieved their GED, however, was their conviction that they could have better lives if they tried the traditional methods of achieving better salaries i.e. completing a high school level of literacy. Their stories gave us an opportunity to understand how the organization of labor could compel people to make choices that took them back to the academic spaces that had forsaken them earlier in their lives. The women's stories also opened a window on the long history of Black people's dearly-cherished ideals for their own success in formal education. This opportunity to see the world from the Black mothers' view was a chance to appreciate their interest in the family's well-being against all odds.

Through these stories one can understand that the need to do "different" or "better" for the family was intimately bound up in the push from traditional institutions to make people do what they felt was against their better interest in the first place (Fine, 1991; Giroux, 1992; Freire & Macedo, 1987). The one compelling reason for completing the GED at a later age than that of a high school student was the need for a salary. The hunger to be involved in a more meaningful form of education, more creative exchange with the teachers who people the life of a student, was overshadowed by the necessity to earn a living wage. Not a wage that guaranteed survival, but one that would afford a decent set of circumstances so that body and soul could thrive together. This quest for "education" was replaced by an acceptance of "schooling".

Bright minds turned their attention away from a pursuit of knowledge, in the sense of “reading the world” (Freire & Macedo, 1987), to the soul-numbing challenge of making a daily bread so that kith and kin could thrive. The work of custodian, housekeeper, child watcher, and teacher, filled the daily hours of these women as it did the time of those women who were the first generation out of slavery (Giddings, 1984). The reality of physical labor as the most accessible form of paid labor compelled these women to take what they could get and make a better way for themselves and their families.

It is surprising to find this particular kind of story at the end of this study. How could we have gone on a hunting expedition to record the stories of successful GED students and come back with a documentation of the challenges that our society constructs for those who are creative and enterprising? We seemed to end up quite like Fine (1991) who looked at the experiences of high school dropouts in New York and heard that they were among the best students in their respective schools before they chose alternative paths. We are left with the reality that the GED represents more than a high school equivalency test. We have to admit the fact that we misjudged these Black women’s intellectual competence when we began this project.

At the start of the study it was difficult for the team to locate and then get these GED graduates to agree to do these interviews. Our society unfortunately does not champion the success of GED graduates. In fact, our team witnessed a general disquiet among people who admitted that they had friends, spouses, or parents, who did their GED at some “late” point in their life. People seemed to lower their voices and turn slightly away from us as they offered names of contacts that they knew of in the GED ranks. One of my graduate students was stumped for a response when she asked one of her colleagues for contacts to GED graduates. The colleague, who was a teacher at the middle school where my graduate assistant was teaching at the time, offered her name as a volunteer for the project. It is a strange phenomenon, this sense of disquiet that comes over people, when you think of the three-quarter million people who are enrolled in these GED classes across the country. The GED is supposed to be a “good” thing for adults to do, right? Or is it?

We expected these women to represent a group of students who came to a hard place in their lives and took the only course open to them. No one expected to come away thinking of them as women who had the potential to be stellar students at their high schools, but chose to walk away from the scene because it was not worth their time. We had not allowed these women any agency in their choice. We, who may have considered ourselves to be womanist in the ranks of Alice Walker (1984), did not imagine that these women chose from among the slim pickings that were offered to them and came away with a decision to shape their lives in the fashion that represented a slight glimmer of self-worth. The actual process of making the decision to join a GED class was tough on their self-esteem. They battled through all kinds of social stigma to come to the place of accepting their status in the ranks of those who must earn their living, but they did this as a consequence of surviving the academic life that they were exposed to in high school. More importantly, it was the fuel of their dreams for their families that motivated their choices.

These women brought their sense of self-determination in to full play as soon as they realized that they were the only ones who were going to put their choices to some practical application. Not their parents, their siblings, their children, or their employers. They were the only ones who had a responsibility to their ambition for their kith and kin and therefore, they had to take whatever measures were necessary to make their lives represent their convictions. Even if it meant going through the GED program so that they could prove that they were capable of completing a task as responsible adults. They came to understand their role as a link in a long chain that their ancestors, the club women, had created for their benefit.

Conclusion

While it is clear to see how the excerpts from these women's interviews that comprise this case study help to establish our perspective on the GED's meaning, it is important that the reader consider the statistics associated with the lives of Black women in order to appreciate the value of the GED in the context of the GED story. Black women had not gained economically, educationally, or socially at the close of the twentieth century. It is an alarming fact that they are actually slipping from national averages in the area of health care and the ability to take care of their children (Center for Policy Alternatives, 2000).

To say that the GED is inconsequential in the face of the challenges that Black women of lower socio-economic status face, would, however, be irresponsible. But it would be equally scurrilous to say that the GED represents the only important benchmark in the lives of women who still must face the insurmountable challenge of racism as it exists in the United States (Tatum, 1997). Structurally, the society has not changed to accommodate the number of Black women who are entering the work force each year. Therefore, Black women are forced to find "non-traditional" forms of employment at low wages in order to keep body and soul together. This push to find work, not even meaningful work in most cases, continues to contribute to the increase in the arrest and sentencing of young, Black women to prison (Davis, 1983). The conditions under which Black women and their children are living continue to represent a serious national threat to the reputation of the United States as one of the "best places to live" in the free world (Edelman, 1984).

So while we trumpet a loud refrain of praise to the Black women in this study, all of whom are employed and considering further educational study, we must also be aware that these women will be entering academic settings that have not made it easy for them to thrive in the past. The institutional challenges that await them have been clearly delineated in the experiences of Black women in higher education (Gregory, 1999). Unless these women in the project find themselves among a strong support group, a network of like minds and concerns (Dowdy, 2001), they may most likely flounder against the rocks of institutional racism.

Embodied in the stories of these women, still hopeful of achieving a high level of economic stability for themselves and their children, is the legacy of Blacks and education in this country. The will to live, to thrive, as shown in the establishment of schools by Nannie Helen Burroughs and Ida B. Wells-Barnett (Giddings, 1984) early on in the post-slavery society, is testimony of the Black nation's belief in the life of the higher mind. But the challenge of the confounding social environment today remains a hurdle that has not been eradicated or lessened

since the end of slavery in 1865. The obstacles to social advancement for Black people have only taken on new forms in this century according to Elaine Brown in a public address at Florida International University in 2002.

So, to leave these women and their lives to the test of time, we must make peace with the fact that Black people have come a long way from the days when it was illegal to read or write (McFeely, 1991). Black people are getting hired now in places that would not even consider thinking of them as potential workers, and it is true that the number of Black women elected to political positions had increased in the decade of the 1990s. Black women are moving up in the society, even though it is at a rate slower than the eye can see or the mind can conceive.

To understand the impatience behind our thoughts at the end of this study, however, we must look at the nation and then consider the percentage of people in it who are non-white. We must ask ourselves what must be expected of Black women in the context of a society that has never allowed itself to enjoy the reality of a truly integrated workforce and the benefits that diversity can represent for all? In other words, it is important that we realize that we live with an attitude which cannot accept the things which do not change, always seeks to change the things that we can, and begs for wisdom from a higher power to know the difference. We must work to understand that things change according to the time, place, and need and that what is important to the United States now was not important in 1865, and it will not be so in the year 3000. This line of thinking is the only way to work toward a vision of appreciating the importance of achieving an education, by any means, to Black women in the twenty-first century.

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**AN AUDIOCASSETTE ACCOMMODATION FOR THE TESTS OF
ADULT BASIC EDUCATION: INITIAL VALIDITY EVIDENCE**

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Abstract

The validity of an audiocassette accommodation for the Test of Adult Basic Education was assessed with 500 adult education students. Students completed Survey Edition Forms 7 and 8 with and without the audiocassette. Equivalence coefficients range from .71 to .83 ($ps < .001$) across the tests. The best predictor of the supplement's benefit across the tests is improved performance on the Test of Adult Basic Education Reading test ($r = .57, p < .01$). Differences between Reading test scores with and without the audiocassette are used to determine students for whom the audiocassette might be a valid accommodation.

The Tests of Adult Basic Education (TABE [1967, 1976, 1987, 1994]) is regarded as a staple for U.S. adult education and literacy programs (Beck, 1998; Ehringhaus, 1991; Rogers, 1998) and is commonly used for pre- and post-testing, instruction planning, progress measurement, determining GED readiness, and measuring attainment of employer- or training program-established criteria (Dugger & Dugger, 1998; Franklin & Streeter, 1995; Hahn, 1994; Moore & Davies, 1984; Roberts, Harper, & Preszler, 1997). Spanish-language, computer-administered, large print, and abbreviated and complete editions add to the TABE's utility and subsequent popularity.

In addition to the alternate Spanish-language and computer-administered TABE forms, an audiocassette TABE form was developed in 2001. This supplemental audiocassette allows students to individually listen to TABE instructions, questions and response choices while using the normal test booklets and answer forms. The audiocassette TABE is intended as a reasonable accommodation for students with reading and related disabilities.

The provision of testing accommodations such as the audiocassette TABE is conjointly driven by legal (e.g., *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*) and ethical code (e.g., *Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct*, 2002). Such code requires tests and evaluative materials be validated for their intended use. Evidence of test validity is necessary to ensure that tests reliably measure target skills, and not unintended factors (e.g., reading disability, cultural differences, sensory impairments, or fatigue). Audiocassette supplements can increase score validity in non-reading areas for reading-dependent tests such as the TABE.

The current study represents an initial examination of TABE audiocassette validity with adult education students. Primary foci are measuring validity coefficients between TABE

audiocassette and written forms, identifying student subgroups appropriate for the audiocassette accommodation, and suggesting initial guidelines for audiocassette use.

Establishing supplemental form validity is a complex extension of alternate form validity. Alternate form validity includes highly correlated scores between forms, as well as similar means, standard deviations, distributions, standard errors of measurement, item content, and correlations with other measures (Kline, 2000; Nitko, 1996). Supplements should also demonstrate benefit to intended populations directly resulting from the additions, and lack of advantage to other populations (Harker, 1991; Kosciulek & Ysseldyke, 2000; Phillips, 1994). For example, a valid large print supplement should show benefit to students with low vision that results from the increased text size rather than from altered text formatting that assists most all students. To be a valid supplement, students with reading disabilities should demonstrate higher TABE scores with the audiocassette on both reading and reading-dependent tests. The supplement should permit means, standard deviation and other score parameters to be comparable to nondisabled populations. Students without reading disabilities should evidence no advantage from the audiocassette and have score parameters similar to alternate forms of the TABE.

Study hypotheses, design and analysis were based on the above factors and study goals. (Validity) coefficients of equivalence for audiocassette and non-audiocassette (written) scores would be high, yet lower than TABE alternate form coefficients because the supplement offers the potential for discordant scores for some students. Student performance would yield three distinct groups: a group with higher audiocassette than written performance, a group with similar audiocassette and written performance, and a group with lower audiocassette performance. Convergence and divergence of score distributions and other characteristics would support the group divisions and offer evidence of TABE audiocassette validity with defined students.

Method

Participants

All participants were selected from Arkansas adult education and literacy programs. The number of participants from each of the state's 16 educational cooperatives was determined in proportion with each cooperative's 2000 census population and the goal of 500 total subjects. Programs within cooperatives were then contacted and asked to recruit students, selecting students that were enrolled or enrolling in the program, and giving preference to students with no or minimal TABE experience. Programs were encouraged to provide a variety of students from different subprograms; however, students in English as Second Language subprograms were excluded.

Table 1 summarizes major and specific demographic data for the 500 students completing the study. Most programs routinely give the TABE upon enrollment, so the majority (62%) of students has previous TABE experience. Programs appear to have followed selection guidelines, recruiting students from the state's racial groups, and with a variety of disabilities. Approximately one quarter of students is employed; almost all indicate having part-time, minimum-wage jobs.

Table 1

Self-Reported Subject Characteristics (N = 500)

	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Age (yr.)	29.4	13.4	16.1	71.0
No. of previous TABE	1.0	1.2	0.0	10.0
Highest grade completed	10.5	1.6	5.9	16.9
Sex	<u>n</u>			<u>%</u>
Male	228			45.6
Female	272			54.4
Race				
African-American	152			30.5
American Indian	11			2.2
Asian	9			1.8
Unreported	1			.2
Caucasian	295			59.1
Hispanic	19			3.8
Multiracial	10			2.0
Other				
Haitian	1			.2
Albanian	1			.2
Pacific Islander	1			.2
Disabilities (Self-Reported)				
None	274			54.8
Reading	80			16.0
Math	85			17.0
Writing	47			9.4
Mental Retardation	3			0.6
ADHD	48			9.6
Behavior Problems	17			3.4
Emotional Problems	28			5.6
Physical Disability	27			5.4
Speech/Lang. Disorder	17			3.4
Seizures	10			2.0
Traumatic Brain Injury	8			1.6
Visual Impairment	44			8.8
Hearing Impairment	20			4.0
Employment				
Unemployed	300			60.0
Unreported	34			6.8
Student	3			0.6
Housewife	22			4.4
Employed	141			28.2

Students receive a \$30 money order upon study completion, and programs \$500 for recruiting students. Five students dropped out of the study: two students failed to return following initial background data completion, and two students have developmental delays and one a hearing impairment precluding completion of TABE forms or audiocassette use.

Materials

Tests of Adult Basis Education: Forms 7 & 8. The Tests of Adult Basic Education: Forms 7 & 8 (1994) are group-administered, norm- and criterion-referenced achievement tests designed for adult education programs. The TABE includes a 35-minute Locator Test with subtests of reading (17 items), math (18 items) and language (15 items). Subject raw scores from each subtest are used to determine if a student will be given level E (Easy), M (Medium), D (Difficult), or A (Advanced) of the TABE Complete Battery or Survey Edition.

The TABE Complete Battery has 200 items divided into five tests: Reading, Math Computation, Applied Mathematics, Language, and Spelling. Testing time is approximately 164 minutes. The TABE Survey Edition has 110 items, the same 5 tests, and takes about 87 minutes. Both editions have two alternate forms, 7 and 8, and the four levels. Tests are administered via reusable booklets containing test questions and multiple-choice answers. The student reads all questions and responses. Answers are recorded on a separate, bubble-type answer sheet that is hand scored with a template or carbonless form, or computer scanned.

The current study utilizes the TABE Survey Edition: Forms 7 and 8. The Survey Edition's Reading test has 25 items and a time limit of 25 minutes. Test items include real-world information such as maps, directories, menus, recipes, labels and letters. Stories are also included. Multiple questions assessing various comprehension levels (e.g., literal, inferential, figurative) typically follow the test items. Internal consistency reliabilities for adult education students range from .83 to .91 across forms and levels based on the *TABE Technical Report* (1996).

The Mathematics Computation test has 15 items and a 9-minute time limit. Students are given scrap paper to work problems; calculators are not allowed. Problems are straightforward math operations, involving minimal reading. The Applied Mathematics test has 25 items to be completed in 25 minutes. Calculators are permitted. Problems are traditional math story problems, and often include a graph, chart, sign or map. Reading is necessary for each item. Reported internal consistency reliabilities range from .70 to .90, and .74 to .91 for Mathematics Computation and Applied Mathematics, respectively.

The Language test has 25 items and an 18-minute time limit. Items include short paragraphs followed by multiple questions assessing capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and composition skills. The Spelling test has 20 items to be completed in 10 minutes. Items typically require reading a sentence with an omitted word. The student chooses the missing word's correct spelling from several variants. Internal consistency reliabilities range from .78 to .90 for the Language test; values are not reported for Spelling.

Raw scores from each form and level can be converted to standard scores and grade equivalents based on adult basic education, adult/juvenile offender, vocational/technical or college student normative groups. The TABE Survey Edition yields separate scores for each test except Math Computation (there are reportedly too few items for a reliable score). However, a Total Math score based on both math tests is available. A Total Battery score based on the average of Reading, Total Math and Language scores provide an overall test score. Reliability coefficients for Total Math are omitted from the TABE Technical Report, but can be calculated as a (weighted) composite of individual test reliability. Reliability values for the Total Battery are also omitted, but reporting such values would be impractical, as a composite based on tests comprising this total could come from numerous combinations of levels and reliability coefficients.

TABE Survey Edition Audiocassette Supplement. The supplement was developed in 2001 at the American Printing House for the Blind and is comprised of nine tapes: a Locator Test tape, and one tape for each of the two forms (7 and 8) and four levels (E, M, D, A). The same voice (reader) is used for all tapes. Instructions, test items, and all multiple-choice answers are read while the student follows along in the standard TABE booklet. Following the reading of each item's possible answers, the student is instructed to stop the tape and choose an answer before resuming the tape for the next item.

Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement. The Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement (Woodcock, McGrew, & Mather, 2001) is an individually administered, norm-referenced measure of academic achievement. The study used the Letter-Word Identification and Word Attack Tests. These tests' composite forms the Basic Reading Skills Cluster. Respective overall internal consistency reliabilities are .94, .87 and .95 (Woodcock et al., 2001). The Letter-Word Identification Test assesses knowledge of letter names (at lowest levels), and sight words. The Word Attack Test measures phonics skills. Age norms were used to obtain standard scores for the tests and cluster.

Design and Procedure

The author tested all students in groups of 5 to 25 students at their respective adult education program. Students were informed that participation involved completing a university-approved consent form; background form providing basic demographic information, previous TABE experience and disability information; *TABE Locator Test* using the audiocassette supplement; two *TABE Survey Editions*, one with the audiocassette and one without; and the *Woodcock-Johnson III Tests of Achievement's* (2001) two reading tests.

Each student was given a tape player, tape and headphones, and instructed in their use. Following the Locator Test, students were randomly assigned to one of four groups using a crossover design. Group 1 ($n = 125$) began with TABE Form 7 and no audiocassette, Group 2 ($n = 125$) with Form 7 and audiocassette, Group 3 ($n = 126$) Form 8 and no audiocassette, and Group 4 ($n = 124$) Form 8 and audiocassette. Each test's time limits were strictly followed and did not vary by group. Calculators were not permitted for either math test. Student compliance with audiocassette use was monitored. Students ultimately completed both Forms 7 and 8 of the *TABE Survey Edition*, one with the audiocassette and one without.

TABE Survey Edition results were both computer scanned and hand scored with templates. Score discrepancies from the methods resulted in review of the individual answer sheets. Final results were reported to each adult education program recruiting students. Programs shared results with students according to their established procedure.

Analysis

Coefficients of equivalence are calculated to determine the relationship between the written and audiocassette TABE results. Analysis of Variance and Student *t* tests compare audiocassette and written TABE standard scores. Correlation coefficients between demographic data, non-TABE scores and TABE scores are obtained to determine subgroups benefiting from the audiocassette relative to the written TABE. McNemar's test of differences between correlated proportions is used to compare percentages. Homogeneity of variance is assessed to guide selection of appropriate parameters. A probability level of .05 is chosen as acceptable statistical significance for all planned comparisons.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Summary statistics for all students are presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4. As Table 2 shows, a majority of students (78.8%) attain TABE Locator Test reading scores at the upper levels (Difficult or Advanced). Fewer students reach these levels for math (47%), $z_{pc} = 11.1, p < .001$ and language (54.8%), $z_{pc} = 9.5, p < .001$. Woodcock-Johnson mean values (Table 3) reveal upper elementary basic reading skills, with standard scores in the low average range, and comparable sight word (Letter-Word Identification) and phonetic skills (Word Attack), $t = 1.1, p = .13$. Repeated measures ANOVA across TABE tests (Table 4) denote no significant main effects or interaction for administration method (audio v. written) and TABE form (7 v. 8), $F(1, 996) = .00 - 3.6, ps > .05$. However, Table 4 shows higher mean TABE standard scores and grade equivalents for the written (non-audiocassette) Applied Math and Total Math scores, $t(499) = 3.3 - 4.6, ps < .001$.

Table 2
Locator Test Summary

Subtest	Level (%)			
	Easy	Medium	Difficult	Advanced
Reading	5.6	15.6	45.0	33.8
Math	10.0	43.0	32.6	14.4
Language	18.0	27.2	31.4	23.4

Table 3
Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement Results

Test	Standard Score/Grade Equivalent			
	Mean	SD	Min.	Max
Basic Reading Skills Cluster	84.3/6.5	10.8/3.3	48/0.9	110/18.0
Letter-Word Identification	83.6/7.3	11.9/3.4	40/0.8	111/18.0
Word Attack	83.9/5.6	11.3/3.5	47/1.0	121/18.0

Same-test coefficients of equivalence for audio and written TABE scores are Reading: .71; Math Applications .75; Language .71; Spelling .74; Total Math .83; and Total Battery .87. The reading correlation of equivalence is lower than coefficients for Total Math and Total Battery, $z_r = 4.7, 7.0$, respectively; $ps < .001$. When the overall results are separated by form (e.g., Form 7 with the audiocassette and Form 8 without), same-test coefficients appear similar in magnitude and profile as the overall results, ranging from .69 to .87. Moderately high correlation between reading and other tests ($r = .36$ to $.75$) provide statistical evidence of reading's involvement with other TABE tests.

Table 4
TABE Test Results According to Administration Method

	Standard Score Written Form/Audio Form			
	Mean	SD	Min.	Max
Reading	543.2/547.9	75.8/63.4	175/241	778/756
Math Applications	521.6/514.3*	68.5/69.7	240/240	702/716
Language	532.1/532.7	81.4/77.2	235/235	826/826
Spelling	513.4/511.6	83.2/79.9	220/220	745/725
Total Math	513.8/506.4*	60.5/62.2	305/242	690/678
Total Battery	529.6/529.0	63.2/59.5	268/280	713/740

* $p < .001$

Examining Score Differences

Difference scores for audiocassette and written test standard scores are calculated for each student to permit identification of the hypothesized student subgroup manifesting audiocassette benefit across TABE tests. Age, sex, report of reading disability, TABE Locator Language raw score and Woodcock-Johnson scores independently emerge as related to higher audiocassette scores for the TABE Reading test, $|r| = .10 - .24$, $ps < .05$. However, no single variable is significantly associated with differences scores across all TABE tests.

Multiple regression of all demographic variables with difference scores for TABE Reading shows a low correlation ($R^2 = .02$); however, age, sex and report of disability emerge as significant correlates. Further analysis reveals that the profile of young males reporting any disability ($n = 73$) to demonstrate higher audiocassette performance for three TABE tests: Reading, Language and Total Battery, $t(498) = 2.4 - 3.0$, $ps < .01$, but not remaining tests, $t(498) = .4 - 1.6$, $ps > .06$.

Students claiming to have a reading disability ($n = 80$) show a significantly higher audiocassette mean score for TABE Reading, $t(498) = 3.3$, $p = .001$, but no other tests, $t(498) = .2 - 1.70$, $ps > .08$. Figure 1 illustrates this profile. Students reporting a reading disability average 21 points higher on TABE Reading using the audiocassette, but this does not carry over to other tests, suggesting false positives and negatives in reading disability reporting. Although low TABE Locator Language scores and Woodcock-Johnson scores are related to higher audiocassette than written TABE Reading scores, they are not associated with differences for other tests.

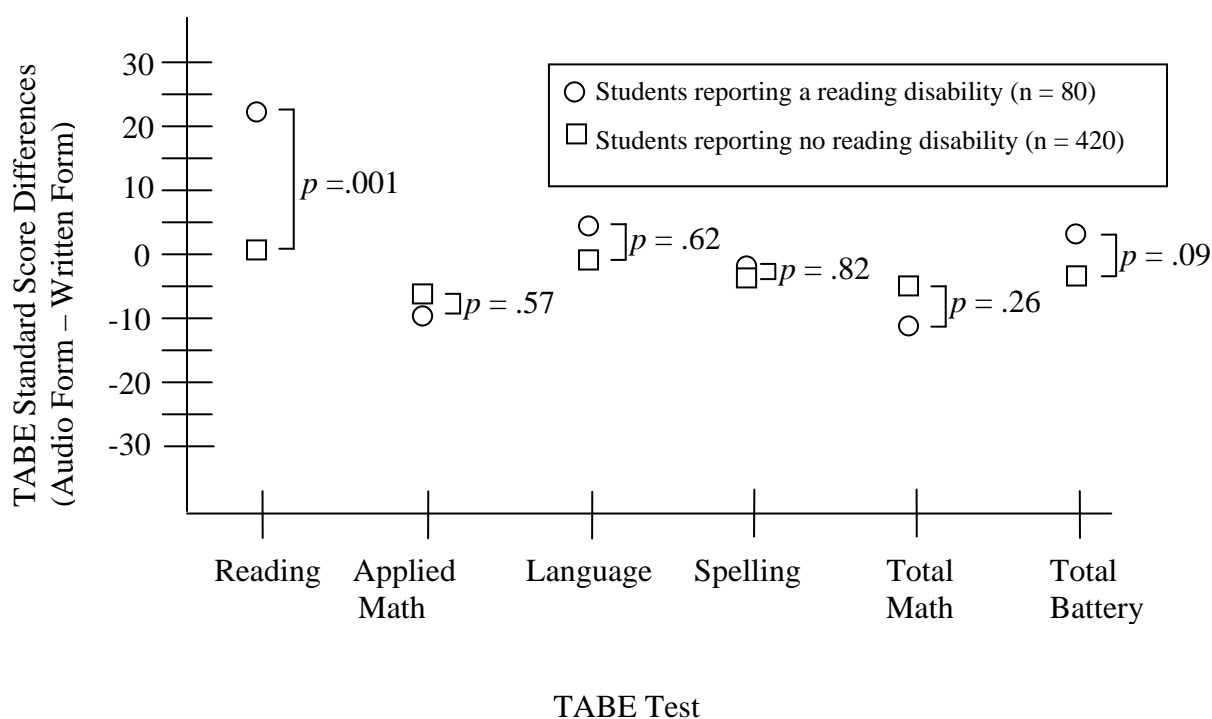


Figure 1. TABE audiocassette benefit across tests according to report of reading disability.

Group Differentiation

Direct measurement of audiocassette benefit is necessary due to the inadequacy of Woodcock-Johnson, Locator Test and background variables to identify a student subgroup demonstrating expected higher audiocassette scores across reading-dependent TABE tests. Specifically, differences between audiocassette and written standard scores from the TABE Reading test are used to determine the degree of benefit from the audiocassette. These differences are entered into an iterative computer model designed to correspond to the initial hypotheses that a valid audiocassette supplement will yield three subgroups, one showing audiocassette benefit across TABE tests (Audio), another with no performance difference (Undifferentiated), and a final (Written) demonstrating hindered audiocassette performance. The model tests all possible divisions of Reading score differences and at each division assesses difference score significance across all TABE tests. Divisions yielding the highest cumulative probability for group differences are identified.

Such modeling initially produces no cutoff values perfectly differentiating students into the three subgroups. That is, students showing the highest and lowest degrees of benefit from the audiocassette for the TABE Reading test are not distinctly different across all remaining TABE tests from students showing no audiocassette benefit on the Reading test. This is not totally unexpected, as one score, Total Math, is partially based on a test (Math Computation) that involves little reading.

The modeling did produce four primary pairs of cutoff values: (107, -89); (75, 22); (75, -27) and (0, -89). Students scoring 107 standard score points or higher on the audiocassette-supplemented Reading test (Audio subgroup; $n = 13$) show higher means than students with differences between 107 and -89 points (Undifferentiated group; $n = 472$) for all TABE scores, $t(483) = 1.70 - 14.77$, $ps < .04$, except Math Applications and Total Math, $t(483) = .74, .17$, $p = .23, .43$, respectively. Students with differences of -89 or lower (Written group; $n = 15$) demonstrate better written performance than the Undifferentiated group for all, $t(485) = 2.10 - 11.02$, $ps < .02$, but Language and Total Math, $t(485) = 1.29, .67$, $p = .10, .25$, respectively.

The second pair of cutoff-values; (75, 22), produces the groups shown in Figure 2. The Audio subgroup performs better with the audiocassette than the Undifferentiated group for all scores. The Written group does worse with the audiocassette than the Undifferentiated group for all scores except Language, Spelling and Total Math.

A third pair of cutoff values; (75, -27), is similar to the second pair except the Audio subgroup ($n = 42$) does not perform better with the audiocassette than the Undifferentiated subgroup ($n = 33$) for Math Applications and Spelling, $t(370) = 1.55, .103$, $p = .06, .15$, respectively. The Written group ($n = 128$) does worse with the audiocassette than the Undifferentiated group for all scores except Math Applications, Language and Total Math, $t(456) = 1.14, .143$, $ps > .08$.

The final cutoff-value pair; (0, -89), yields an Audio subgroup ($n = 263$) performing higher with the audiocassette than the Undifferentiated group ($n = 222$) for all scores, $t(483) = 1.88 - 23.42$, $ps < .03$, except Math Applications and Total Math, $t(483) = 1.16, .69$, $p = .12, .25$, respectively. The Written group ($n = 15$) does worse with the audiocassette than the

Undifferentiated group for all scores except Language and Total Math, $t(235) = 1.60, .53, p = .06, .30$, respectively.

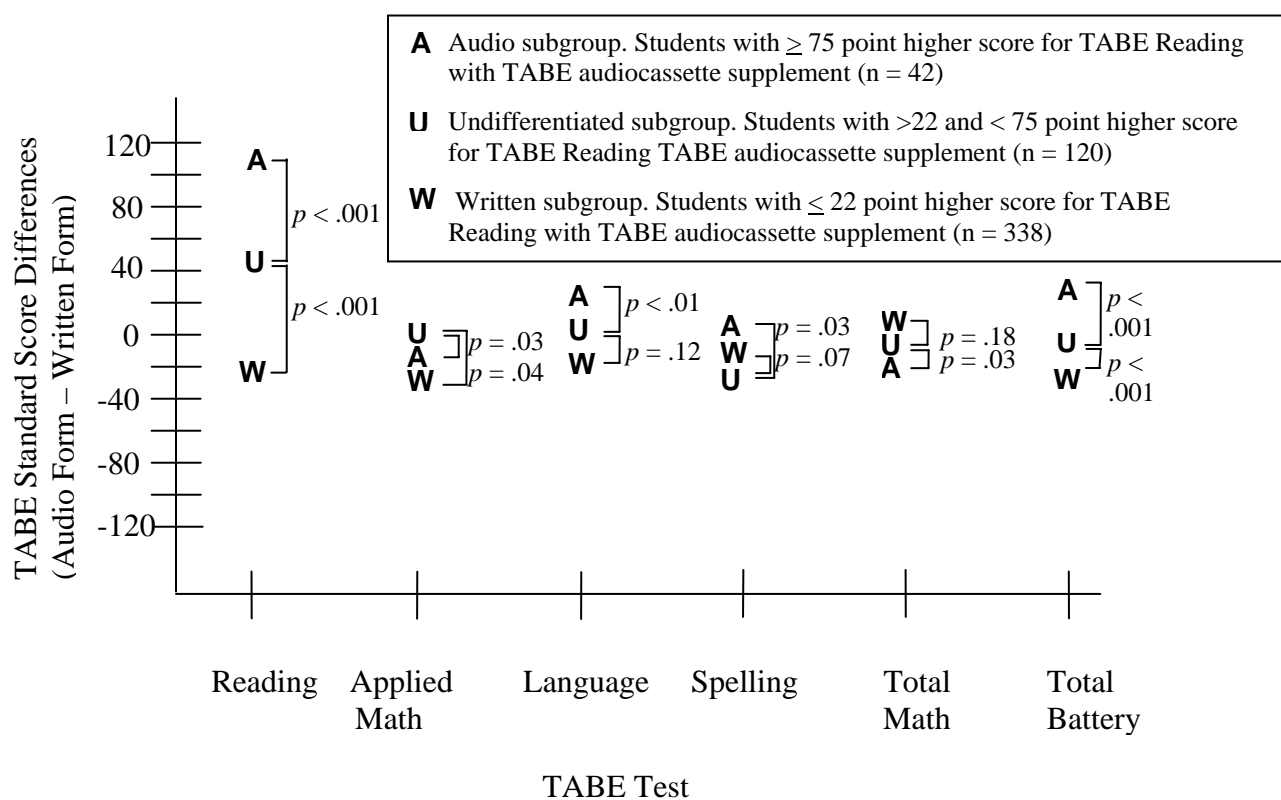


Figure 2. TABE audiocassette benefit across tests for subgroups defined by Reading test audiocassette benefit.

In addition to mean test differences, equivalence coefficients of subgroups produced by cutoff pairs also provide evidence of subgroup validity. Audiocassette/written coefficients for the Audio groups' same-test scores are .52 to .92, .64 to .85, .64 to .85 and .73 to .90, for the four cutoff pairs, respectively. The Undifferentiated groups' same-test coefficients are .72 to .89, .74 to .98, .71 to .91 and .68 to .90, respectively, and the Written groups' coefficients are .83 to .97, .71 to .90, .76 to .92 and .83 to .97.

Discussion

This study is an initial investigation of TABE audiocassette supplement validity as an accommodation, and also provides findings relevant to the use of audiocassette and reader accommodations.

Validity of the TABE Audiocassette

Although some studies (e.g., Gresham, 1986; Henning, Levy, & Aderman, 1972) attempt to demonstrate accommodation validity across an entire sample, supplements such as the TABE audiocassette are intended to produce differential results based on reading (Warner-Benson, 2000). As a result, the overall equivalence coefficients across tests (.71 to .84) are of limited value, as the accommodation is not intended to be valid for all students. Yet, as previously mentioned, these overall coefficients should be lower than alternate-form reliability coefficients. Unfortunately, the TABE Technical Manual is void of alternate-form reliability data.

Of greater value is examination of equivalence coefficients for subgroups representing intended populations. A value of .90 is considered the minimum for equivalence (Kline, 2000), and the Undifferentiated subgroups' overall score (Total Battery) values range from .88 to .93, suggesting the forms were aptly interchangeable for them. In contrast, Audio and Written subgroups' lower equivalence values appropriately signify non-equivalent forms for these subgroups.

Study results do not indicate that need for the TABE audiocassette supplement can be determined from student report of reading problems or disability, other background variables, reading skill assessment, or TABE Locator Test performance. Although identification of a student profile associated with audiocassette need would be convenient, lack of a profile is not surprising given the heterogeneity of students, educational backgrounds, and reading levels of adult education students. In addition, most programs can only estimate how many learning disabled students are in their programs, and have no standard procedure for identifying students with learning disabilities (Ryan & Price, 1993).

Need for the audiocassette supplement appears best determined by directly assessing improvement in reading with the audiocassette, then ascertaining if certain degrees of improvement are associated with expected benefit from other reading-dependent TABE tests. This approach is not new, and is often required because accommodations tend to be overly recommended, ineffective for most students, and resistant to the prediction of individual student benefit (Helwig & Tindal, 2003; Hollenbeck, 2002). These problems necessitate a data-driven, post hoc approach to determine accommodation benefit that is based on individual performance and includes referred and non-referred students (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2001; Fuchs, Fuchs, Eaton, Hamlett, & Karns, 2000). Such an approach yielded four student divisions in the current study. The first division yielded student subgroups with extreme performance differences. Those students scoring 107 or more standard score points higher with the audiocassette on the TABE Reading test appear to be a small percentage of the sample (2.6%) with severe reading disorders that result in audiocassette benefit across all non-math TABE tests. A similar percentage (3.0%) scoring 89 or more points higher without the audiocassette represent a highly reading competent group who were substantially hindered by the audiocassette's added procedures. Once these extremes were removed, the remaining students as a group showed minimal or mixed benefit from the audiocassette.

A second division (see Figure 2) defines less severe groups. The subgroup benefiting from the audiocassette (8.4% of sample) has better reading skills than the first division's Audio

group. These students include those appearing to have severe reading disorders, but look to be primarily comprised of those with more specific reading disabilities. The division's Undifferentiated subgroup appears to have mild reading problems, performing better with the audiocassette on the Reading test, but showing neither benefit nor hindrance on other tests. The large subgroup performing better without the audiocassette (67.6% of sample) include those highly competent readers previously described, but perhaps also students less hindered, those disliking the audiocassette, those competent with compensatory reading strategies, and visual learners.

Third and fourth divisions add limited insight into audiocassette use. The third division's cutoff values (75, -27) are similar to the second's (75, 22) and include a larger Undifferentiated subgroup with milder reading problems. The fourth division primarily separates those showing any degree of gain from the audiocassette (regardless of reading skills), those with no clear profit, and highly reading-competent individuals.

Guideline for TABE Audiocassette Use

Current results suggest that the TABE audiocassette supplement can increase the TABE's validity for specific student subgroups with reading problems. Identifying these subgroups requires administering both forms of the TABE Reading test, one form with the audiocassette and one without. If the adult education program intends to provide the accommodation for students with severe reading problems, then a 107 standard score difference or more in favor of the audiocassette form would signal the need to complete the TABE using the audiocassette. If the program desires to use the accommodation with students with less severe, specific reading problems, then a 75-point difference could be used. These values are not dissimilar to the one standard deviation difference recommended by Fuchs et al. (2000) as indicating accommodation benefit, as a TABE standard deviation is approximately 100 standard score points. Of course, students who have, or are regarded as having, reading disabilities are eligible under the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973* (PL 93-11; and 1974 amendments, PL 93-516) for accommodations such as the TABE audiocassette. However, such students might not benefit from the audiocassette. The following detailed guidelines are suggested for TABE audiocassette use.

1. TABE Locator Test

Allow all students to use the TABE audiocassette supplement for their initial TABE Locator Test. If the audiocassette is not used with all such students, then students with reading problems and undiagnosed reading disorders can obtain abnormally low, invalid scores on the Locator Test's Math and Language portions. These invalid scores can result in administration of TABE Survey Edition levels that are too low, and thereby limit the scores such students can attain.

- a. Initially acquaint students with correct tape player and headphone use.
- b. Use the audiocassette for initial practice and sample items. Inquire about any problems.

- c. Monitor compliance with audiocassette use as students complete the Locator Test. Ensure that each student is appropriately using the audiocassette and is not working ahead or behind the audio.
- d. Use the normal time limits. Upon completion, score the Locator Test using the standard criteria.

2. TABE Survey Edition

The following procedures are only for students who completed the TABE Locator test according to the above steps. These procedures are appropriate for a student's initial TABE Survey Edition administration.

- a. Give the correct Survey Edition Reading level (either Form 7 or 8) booklet and answer sheet to each student. Provide the appropriate TABE audiocassette for that form and level.
- b. Require students to complete the Reading test using the audiocassette. Closely monitor compliance as during the Locator test. Use the standard time limit.
- c. Upon completion of the Reading test, *do not* continue to the Math Computation test. Instead, distribute to each student a new answer sheet and booklet for the alternate TABE form. Have students complete the Reading test without an audiocassette (the sample items can be omitted). Follow the standard time limit.
- d. Upon completion, score both reading tests and determine the scale score (SS) for each test.
- e. Decisions regarding individual student completion of the TABE Survey Edition with or without the audiocassette should be based on the educational program's required or desired use of the audiocassette and the difference between Reading scale scores. The chart below summarizes primary target groups and score differences for continued audiocassette use for the remainder of the Survey Edition. For example, if a program intends to use the audiocassette with students appearing to have specific or severe reading disabilities, then students with a higher Reading standard score using the audiocassette of 75 points or more should be given the *TABE Form (7 or 8)* originally used with the audiocassette, and allowed to complete that form using the appropriate audiocassette for each level. Due to measurement error solely resulting from the TABE Reading tests, some students might not obtain a score difference exceeding the cutoff values, yet have a true difference exceeding the cutoffs. Programs wanting to not overlook such students can adjust cutoff values using a moderate (1 SEM) adjustment as reflected in the chart.
- f. Allow students with reading score differences less than shown in the above chart to complete the TABE Survey Edition form initially begun without the audiocassette. Ignore the reading score from the audiocassette. If such students later re-take the TABE, do not use the audiocassette for the Locator Test.
- g. For students continuing to use the audiocassette, monitor compliance during all tests. Ensure appropriate audiocassette use, making certain students do not forget or ignore the

audiocassette. Use the standard time limits for each test. For these students, interpret the scores from all but the Reading test as valid indicators of student skills in each area. Interpret the Reading score *without* the audiocassette as indicative of a current reading or instructional level. In contrast, scores from the Reading test *with* the audiocassette represent a potential reading level, or a level that might be reached before comprehension or language interventions might be required.

Guidelines for Continued Audiocassette Use						
Target Group for Audiocassette Use	TABE Reading Test Minimum Absolute Scale Score Difference (Audio-Written)	Minimum Adjusted (1 SEM) Scale Score Difference (Audio – Written) ----- Level -----				
		<u>E</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>D</u>	<u>A</u>	
Severe Reading Disability	107	62	62	65	72	
Specific Reading Disability	75	30	30	33	40	
Mild Reading Problems	22	-23	-23	-20	-13	
General Benefit	0	-45	-45	-42	-35	

2. TABE Survey Edition

The following procedures are only for students who completed the TABE Locator test according to the above steps. These procedures are appropriate for a student's initial TABE Survey Edition administration.

- a. Give the correct Survey Edition Reading level (either Form 7 or 8) booklet and answer sheet to each student. Provide the appropriate TABE audiocassette for that form and level.
- b. Require students to complete the Reading test using the audiocassette. Closely monitor compliance as during the Locator test. Use the standard time limit.
- c. Upon completion of the Reading test, *do not* continue to the Math Computation test. Instead, distribute to each student a new answer sheet and booklet for the alternate TABE form. Have students complete the Reading test without an audiocassette (the sample items can be omitted). Follow the standard time limit.

Limitations

Three primary factors limit study generalization. Shortcomings of the current TABE have been previously noted (e.g., Beck, 1998; Rogers, 1998). The TABE Technical Manual provides no alternate-form reliability data, correlational data between the Complete Battery and the Survey Edition, or readability statistics for each level and test. A second limiting factor is compliance with audiocassette use. During the current study, continual monitoring was necessary

to detect and correct noncompliance with audiocassette use. Poor compliance with audiocassette supplements is not new (e.g., Wisner, 1987), and greater compliance would likely have affected audiocassette scores. A third primary limit is the sample. Although the sample is of adequate size, it is based on students collected from a single time and state. Other programs will want to examine Table 1 to determine how well the study population represents their students.

Further Study and Improvements

If the TABE audiocassette supplement had originally been developed and released with the written forms, it undoubtedly would have received significant review and scrutiny. Discriminant validity data for students with well-defined reading disabilities, predictive validity for audiocassette TABE scores and other nonreading-dependent measures, and additional concurrent validity data would be critical to establish responsible and valid TABE audiocassette use. Rather than overlook the audiocassette's shortcomings in a haste to welcome its potential contribution, TABE users are well served to be cautious of its validity and push for further validity evidence that would initially have been critical to evaluate the TABE audiocassette's utility.

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**COMMUNITY-BASED ADULT LITERACY PROGRAMS:
TRANSLATING POSTMODERN THEORY INTO ADMINISTRATIVE PRACTICE**

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Abstract

Postmodernism permeates the community-based adult literacy program model. The administrative roles of community advisory groups and literacy program coordinators are critical in ensuring that their programs stay true to their postmodern origins. This means ensuring that they do not lose their grass roots commitment to small classroom groups characterized by shared power and professional autonomy, collegial collaboration among instructors, learner-centered and experience-based instruction, and student empowerment, de-marginalization and de-differentiation. This article focuses on the postmodern responsibilities assumed by those who are most directly involved with each adult literacy program and its students: the advisory group members and the program coordinator.

When the United Nations declared 1990 as International Literacy Year, and the 1990s as the Decade of Literacy, adult educators were “summoned to build a literate world by the year 2000” (Evanson, 1990, p. 5). Western world responses to this challenge were motivated by a shared understanding that a financially and technologically powerful community with literacy deficits is still a “community facing decline” (Wood, 1990, p. 6). The community-based adult literacy program model’s focus on part-time, small-group delivery by paid instructors differs significantly from the traditional community college and one-to-one basic skills instruction.¹ Postmodernism permeates the adult literacy education programs that are grounded in this model.

Postmodernism is the result of the “relentless march” (Thompson, 1993, p. 183) of technology (Fitzclarence, Green, & Bigum, 1995; Kenway, 1995; Knight, 1995) and globalization (Crook, Pakulski, & Waters, 1992; Kenway, 1995). It marks a “traumatic and necessary” (Fitzclarence et al., 1995, p. 148) departure from modernism: from order to disorder

¹ All non-referenced assumptions that this article makes about literacy programming are based on the author’s experiences as the Community Developer for Literacy in Rural and Northern Manitoba, Canada, from 1990 to 1993. The adult literacy programs she supervised provided both group and individualized instruction in response to individual/group/community needs for academic/social/community skills development among learners with incoming functional literacy problems.

(English, 1997; Evers & Lakomski, 1996; Jeffcutt, 1993), differentiation to de-differentiation (Crook et al., 1992; Hassard, 1993), and certainty to uncertainty (Billig & Simons, 1994; Gergen, 1994). In postmodernism, the modern narratives of “truth” (Gergen, 1994; Hassard, 1993; Kenway, 1995) have been replaced by “the constitutive powers of language” (Alvesson & Deetz, 1996, p. 205) to represent the subjective experiences (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991; Hargreaves, 1994) of multiple voices (Brown, 1994; Linstead, 1993). Hargreaves (1994) describes the organizational structures that arise from postmodernism as a “moving mosaic” (p. 9) comprised of “dynamic networks” (p. 9) of roles and functions. Whether one sees postmodernism as a “cupboard . . . still empty” (English, 1997, p. 22) or one in which “a thousand flowers bloom” (Crook et al., 1992, p. 68) depends on one’s position on “the cusp” (Crook et al., 1992, p. 57) of the postmodern transformation.

Community-based adult literacy programs are poised on the positive side of this cusp. Born of a postmodern belief in starting small and integrating bottom-up with top-down implementation strategies (Hargreaves, 1994), these programs are winners (Fitzclarence et al., 1995) in postmodern educational restructuring. The programs typically serve about fifteen students at a time during day and evening sessions in modest rented (or sometimes donated) facilities, and there are direct lines of communication among the program coordinators, the community advisory groups (which often include student representatives), and the funding agency representatives. These “grass roots” (Crook et al., 1992, p. 155) programs, established by small groups of citizens who share a concern for residents whose academic needs have not been met by the regular school system, are redolent of Aronowitz & Giroux’s (1991) images of a postmodern high school (albeit with older students who have more diverse learning needs and who negotiate their own attendance patterns):

One can imagine a postmodern high school. One of its more distinctive features is that . . . students and teachers negotiate which courses, if any, are to be required. . . . The normal class (the length and frequency of which are indeterminate) now resembles an open classroom where small groups of students are simultaneously studying different aspects of the course subject matter, and others are engaged in individual tutorials with the teacher or another knowledgeable person. . . . The teacher employs a wide variety of pedagogic styles . . . (pp. 20-21)

The community-based adult literacy program model recognizes that “power is a matter of ‘social interdependence’” (Hassard, 1993, p. 21). Program coordinators and other staff share “horizontal power” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 123) over program delivery. Because they normally share students within a single classroom space, and because the nature of their instruction is student-centered in response to negotiated individualized learning goals, staff interactions typically manifest the “collaborative decision-making and problem solving [that] is a cornerstone of postmodern organizations” (Hargreaves, 1994, p. 17). Paid staff (who are usually accredited professional teachers) earn modest incomes in literacy programs; the teachers who are drawn to work in these programs are thus prone to share a grass roots “unselfish dedication” (Crook et al., 1992, p. 155) with their volunteer workers and their unpaid advisory group members. A “shared culture” (Hargreaves, p. 17) is nurtured when paid and unpaid staff and students endeavor to create a harmonious working environment for achieving (sometimes shared, but often disparate) learning goals. Community advisory group members are usually not directly involved in day-to-day program operations; therefore, they accord their coordinators and

instructors the “professional autonomy” (Thompson, 1993, p.186) that is a trademark of truly postmodern organizations.

The students in community-based adult literacy programs are voluntary learners who have their own individual motivations to learn, ranging from specific job and family-related needs (such as getting an air brakes license, reading a highway map, or helping school-aged children with their homework) to general life-enhancement goals (such as being able to read for pleasure or master the math skills that eluded them in grade school). Their initial levels of motivation are heightened when they realize that their literacy program coordinators and teachers value them, enjoy working with them, and want to help them meet (and redefine) their learning goals through classroom activities that are tailored to their individual needs and preferences – that is, when they are approached with “a pedagogy that takes their lives seriously” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 52), validates their out-of-school experiences as “a viable form of knowledge” (Aronowitz & Giroux, p. 25), and connects their learning to what is “real” (Brown, 1994, p. 32) and attainable (Carter & Jackson, 1993). Community-based adult literacy programs are thus characterized by the “difference and specificity” (Fitzclarence et al., 1995, p. 134) that earmarks postmodern education.

An underlying motif for the community-based adult literacy model is the postmodern desire “to deepen and extend . . . the modernist ideal of what constitutes a decent, humane, and good life” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 80). This includes understanding that “different forms of literacy . . . are to be weighed against the capacity they have for enabling people to . . . function as part of a wider democratic culture” (Aronowitz & Giroux, p. 51). Postmodern values thus pervade community-based adult literacy programs whose pedagogy is designed to empower marginalized adults (Alvesson & Deetz, 1996; Hargreaves, 1994) to take charge of their own learning and become more proactive in their interactions with their worlds outside of school (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991). Adult literacy programs may not adhere to the “politics of radical democracy” (Aronowitz & Giroux, p. 81) that guided Paulo Freire’s (1993) literacy work in Brazil several decades ago, but all are dedicated to the cause of enriching their students’ academic, vocational, and personal lives through the postmodern “knowledge/ power connection” (Alvesson & Deetz, 1996, p. 205).

Community-based adult literacy programs attract students from all walks of life (from mothers on welfare who want to finish high school, to business owners who want to acquire basic computer skills), all ethnic subgroups (from Canadian-born dropouts, to immigrants from the Far East), and all literacy levels (from totally non-literate elderly citizens who want to learn to read before they die, to community college students who need a “crash course” in geometry). Most programs are thus a postmodern “celebration of plurality” (Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 61; see also Young, 1995). Their students learn to respect multiple voices and alternative perspectives (Alvesson & Deetz, 1996; Brown, 1994; Linstead, 1993) within the context of a positive learning climate that cultivates “broader tolerance” (Brown, 1994, p. 26) and “otherness”

(Aronowitz & Giroux, 1991, p. 71).² Whether born of the necessity to have everyone “get along” in cramped classroom quarters or of the altruistic desire to “engage a vision on community in which student voices define themselves in terms of their distinct social formations and their broader collective hopes” (Aronowitz & Giroux, p. 132), community-based adult literacy program coordinators and instructors make concerted efforts to recognize socio-cultural, ethnic, racial, age, and academic differences among students and integrate (i.e., de-differentiate) these differences into the learning milieu.

The administrative roles of advisory groups and program coordinators are critical in ensuring that community-based adult literacy programs stay true to the “new vision and new practices” (Brown, 1994, p. 25) of their postmodern model. This means ensuring that they do not lose their grass roots commitment to small classroom groups characterized by shared power and professional autonomy, collegial collaboration among instructors, learner-centered and experience-based instruction, and student empowerment, de-marginalization and de-differentiation. It means sustaining the postmodern “romantic narrative” (Jeffcutt, 1993, p. 30) of learners overcoming “obstacles . . . posed by opponents in a restrictive society . . . enabling passage into a new and integrated state of society” (p. 30). Close monitoring by government funding agents is an administrative “check-and-balance” as well, but the ultimate responsibility for upholding community-based adult literacy programming’s postmodern traditions rests with those who are most directly involved with each program and its students: the advisory group members and the program coordinator.

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² When the author attended the 2002 Rural Literacy Learners’ Conference in Manitoba, Canada, she was struck by three particularly laudable features: first, the level of professionalism manifested in the learners’ organization and hosting of the conference; second, the broad range of ethnicities and academic levels represented; and third, the degree of collegiality among program members, including that between academically advanced and cognitively challenged fellow students.

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ATTITUDES FOR EFFECTIVE TEACHING

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Abstract

This article briefly describes the conceptual foundations of a theory of practice entitled, Invitational Education. The author proposes that educators can improve their teaching by choosing to adopt and incorporate the basic elements of the theory into their teaching practices.

What do you think determines how well you teach? In this article I propose that what you believe about the process of teaching, yourself and the students you teach greatly influences your effectiveness as a teacher. There exist many theories that attempt to explain human behavior, of which teaching is but one integrated set of complex behaviors that work towards accomplishing the particular goal of helping students learn. How might a teacher change or improve their teaching behaviors to better assist students to learn? I prefer to rely on the simplest of explanations in understanding what determines our behavior. The tenants of Perceptual Psychology (Combs, 1990) state that *beliefs* and *attitudes* determine behavior. Yes, there are many other influential factors of differing import, some biological, some environmental and additional variables that include the interactions of other people. However, the one that we can exert the greatest control over is our own belief system. The choices and decisions we make are based on what we believe to be true about the world around us including ourselves and others. Your belief system about good teaching is the foundation that helps determine how you behave as a teacher. This is assuming one strives to be a good teacher and I believe that most teachers do.

What attitudes or sets of beliefs are beneficial for effective teaching? Purkey and Novak (1984) have outlined basic assumptions for just this purpose. They are optimism, respect, trust and intentionality and form the basis for an emerging theory of practice entitled Invitational Education.

Optimism

This view expresses that people possess untapped potential in all areas of human endeavor. This perspective endorses neither a Pollyannaish nor naive outlook. Why impose limitations when the uniqueness of human beings is that no clear realistic limits to potential have been discovered. None of us can choose a beneficial direction in life without hope that changes for the better are possible.

Respect

Viewing oneself and students as able, valuable, and responsible leads to treating self and others as worthwhile and capable of achieving high-quality outcomes. Shared responsibility based on mutual respect is an indispensable element in any human encounter. This respect is best demonstrated by genuine caring and personal warmth. It is also manifested by establishing a relationship that recognizes basic human equality and the sharing of power within the limits of clear authority.

Trust

Recognize value within the interdependence of human beings where process is as important as product. Encourage an atmosphere of cooperative activity. Understand that making others do what you want without involving them in the process is a lost cause. Treat each individual as the highest authority on his or her personal existence believing that they will find his or her own best ways of being and becoming.

Intentionality

The purposeful application of conscious choice with respect to the direction and purpose of one's behavior is the essence of intentionality. Making the choice to genuinely behave with optimism, respect and trust will help insure that others perceive you as truly holding their best interests as a high priority.

Shaw (2004) has suggested an additional element, genuineness. Genuine behavior is based directly and accurately upon that which the individual truly feels and experiences. Their outward behavior is not tainted or misrepresented and as such, is honestly and appropriately communicated. Their internal experience matches their external communications. Rogers & Freiberg (1994) and others (e.g., Carkhuff, 1969; Patterson & Watkins, 1996) have used the term congruence to describe the condition of human behavior that is genuine. According to these pioneers in the field of counseling Congruence (or genuineness) is:

The state in which self-experiences are accurately symbolized in the self-concept—integrated, whole, genuine (Patterson & Watkins, 1996, p.390). He/she is aware of and accepts his/her own feelings, with a willingness to be and express these feelings and attitudes in words or behavior when appropriate (Patterson & Watkins, 1996, p.404). The therapist is not an impersonal, cold, objective professional, but a real person (Patterson & Watkins, 1996, p.481). They are not engaged in trickery or deceit in their relations with their clients (Patterson & Watkins, 1996, p.497). Genuine people are at home with themselves and therefore can be themselves in all their interactions (Egan, 2002, p. 53). ...the ability to be authentic in the helping relationship. The ability to be real as opposed to artificial, to behave as one feels as opposed to playing the role of the helper... (Capuzzi & Gross, 1999, p. 10).

Brophy (1995) identified general characteristics of teachers that contribute to their success in socializing students. These characteristics include teachers' personal level of social

attractiveness. This should be based on a cheerful disposition, friendliness, emotional maturity, sincerity, and other qualities that indicate good mental health and personal adjustment. In this context, sincerity can be seen as parallel to the description of genuineness outlined in this article.

Being genuine then is behaving without front or facade. The individual is fully aware of his or her feelings at that moment and is able to communicate this experience openly. For behavior to fit the definition of genuineness there must be a sufficient level of self awareness and choice. Invitational Education refers to this process as intentionality.

Palmer (1998) states that teachers can choose to create conditions that assist students learn a great deal or ones that prevent them from learning as much as they can. The intentional act of creating those conditions is what good teaching is all about. It also requires that we understand ourselves exploring the inner sources of both the intent and the act. Good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher, attitudes and beliefs. Good teachers join self and subject and students in the fabric of life making teaching and learning fun, interesting, and productive.

Conclusion

We as teachers, regardless of our subject matter or student population, have a choice to adopt a set of beliefs and attitudes which can be either beneficial or detrimental to our students learning outcomes. The tenants of Invitational Education including the proposed element of genuineness as described herein provide a perspective that can be beneficial for student learning.

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***Empowerment Evaluation Principles in Practice*, edited by David M. Fetterman and Abraham Wandersman. New York: Guilford Press, 2005, 321 pages \$27.00 (paperback).**

Editors Fetterman and Wandersman define empowerment evaluation (EE) as “an evaluation approach that aims to increase the probability of achieving program success by (1) providing stakeholders with tools for assessing the planning, implementation, and self-evaluation of their programs, and (2) mainstreaming evaluation as part of the planning and management of the program/organization” (p. 28). The intent of the book is to conceptualize and operationalize EE around a set of ten interdependent and “synergistic” (p. 9) principles that underlie and guide EE. These principles are improvement, community ownership, inclusion, democratic participation, social justice, community knowledge, evidence-based strategies, capacity building, organizational learning, and accountability. The collection is for scholars and practitioners from a broad range of disciplines who are interested in EE as a new domain of evaluation practice, for those who believe in the power of collective wisdom to shape programs, and for those committed to empowering groups and communities.

The book is of interest to adult education (AE) and human resource development (HRD) because in contemporary evaluation practice, AE and HRD scholars and practitioners who evaluate programs focus on systematic collaborative or participatory inquiry and open communication to draw from stakeholders’ experiences with and opinions about their programs, to better depict the context and relationship within programs, to increase stakeholders’ sense of ownership of the evaluation, and to enhance chances that the evaluation findings will be used to improve programs. As Russ-Eft and Preskill (2001) note “evaluation has become the means for providing information for learning, decision-making, and action” (p. 39) in today’s social organizations. Russ-Eft and Preskill (2001) and Torres, Preskill, and Piontek (1996) suggest EE is an evaluation approach that fosters learning and improves performance in organizations.

The book has nine chapters sequenced with the intention to lead the reader from theoretical underpinnings to real case examples of EE. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the evolution of EE since its introduction in 1994. Fetterman discusses the two existing books on empowerment evaluation, *Empowerment Evaluation: Knowledge and Tools for Self-Assessment and Accountability* by Fetterman, Kaftarian, and Wandersman (1996) and *Foundations of Empowerment Evaluation* by Fetterman (2001) and their contributions to EE. Fetterman asserts that EE is different from participatory collaborative, and utilization evaluations, which are the philosophical foundations of EE, because it is a change process in which the community of learners (not the evaluator and the program funder) is in charge of its own evaluation and because the primary task of EE is to build evaluation capacity within community agencies (see O’Sullivan [2004] for a more in depth discussion of the similarities and difference of participatory, collaborative, and EE). The empowerment evaluator assumes the role of a critical friend, a coach, a facilitator, a teacher, or an expert who does not dominate and does not have

Ianinska, S. (2005). [Review of the book *Empowerment evaluation principles in practice*]. *New Horizons in Adult Education*, 19(2), 51-55.

<http://education.fiu.edu/newhorizons>

NOTE: *New Horizons* accepted Ms. Ianinska’s book review before she became the journal’s Book and Media Review Editor.

decision-making power but who helps community members to “develop a rigorous and organized approach” (p. 12) to accomplishing goals and closing the gap between “what is intended and what actually happens” (p. 13) in a program. The above roles of the empowerment evaluator may be unacceptable to evaluators who value professional expertise and experience as crucial to conducting rigorous and valid evaluations. Indeed, the constant reiteration throughout the book of the importance of building evaluation capacity within the program community and the emphasis on organizational learning for program improvement makes the reader wonder whether EE is not simply a training activity on how to conduct self-evaluations to increase chances for program success. Moreover, the book does not provide convincing evidence that communities have internalized evaluation as part of their daily program management beyond the EE projects. Statements like “staff members reported perceived increases in their evaluation capacity over time” (p. 81, citing Snell-Johnson & Keener, 2000); “community members learned how to use evaluation to enhance the probability of accomplishing their objectives” (p. 105); or “Teachers, administrators, and community members reported applying empowerment evaluation to their personal life as well, ranging from their church activities to their family disputes or concerns” (p. 115) do not assure that the community was self-empowered to conduct EE. Research based evidence is needed to confirm these assertions and to sustain the credibility of EE.

Fetterman claims that various not-for-profit organizations, health organizations, and communities in distress throughout the world have benefited from EE projects that have helped these organizations and communities to accomplish their goals by utilizing a systematic and cyclical process of planning, implementation, assessment, and revision of their programs. But the reader should be cautioned that such claims are anecdotal and aimed at promoting EE. There is no evidence other than the statements of the empowerment evaluators of what EE has accomplished. For example, regarding capacity building in Arkansas Delta school districts, Fetterman states that “The community learned how to internalize the logic of evaluation and conduct pre- and posttests in order to monitor the progress of its students, teachers, and administrators... They enhanced their evaluation capacity and their teaching, learning, and administrative capacity simultaneously” (p. 114). How do we know the community learned the logic of evaluation? How do we know they enhanced their evaluation capacity? There is no evidence to support the assertions. The viability of empowerment evaluation is yet to be studied and tested. Nevertheless, EE is a worthwhile evaluation approach because its ultimate goal is communities empowered to conduct their own evaluations in order to continually improve their lives.

In Chapter 2, Wandersman et al. define the set of ten principles that guide EE and discuss their importance for the quality of an EE. In Chapter 3, Fetterman reiterates the principles and discusses how they can be applied in practice depending on the stakeholders’ level of commitment to each principle. Fetterman includes a table with examples of evaluator, community, and funder roles in practice at high, medium, and low levels of commitment. The table should be used as a rubric to assess stakeholders’ level of commitment to each principle and to determine the critical point beyond which an evaluation is no longer empowerment. For example, the principle of community ownership means that the community operating the program controls the evaluation planning and implementation and is responsible for all decision-making. At the high level of commitment to the principle, the evaluator serves as a critical

friend, a coach, or a facilitator who makes sure the community understands that it owns the evaluation, provides guidance in conducting the evaluation, and defends community ownership when needed. At the low level of commitment, the evaluator is allowed to maintain control of the evaluation and accepts the fact that the community lacks a sense of ownership.

Chapters 4, 5, and 7 illustrate the application of the principles with five real EE projects. In Chapter 4, Keener et al. reflect on two EE projects that influenced their conceptualization of EE. Some of the lessons learned about improvement and accountability are: (a) neglect of the principle of community ownership brings tension between program participants and evaluators and fear from the evaluation results; (b) negative results are better accepted when presented in an informal and personalized manner rather than in a formal manner; (c) reports prepared by the program partners are more revealing of negative findings than reports prepared by the evaluation team and are not perceived with anxiety; and (d) evaluators should influence decisions when the program community is considering choices which contradict its goals.

In Chapter 5, Fetterman discusses how each of the EE principles was applied in two communitywide initiatives - poorly performing small rural school districts that sought to improve education and tribal villages left behind in the digital age that sought to improve their social and economic conditions - which used EE to develop, implement, assess, and improve their programs. The focus is on a three-step approach to EE: mission, taking stock, and planning for the future. The evaluator first facilitates a discussion about the community's mission. Then the evaluator helps the community identify and prioritize the activities that would help accomplish the mission. Finally, the evaluator facilitates the process of planning how to accomplish the prioritized activities, including what evaluation tools and methods to use.

In Chapter 7 Lentz et al. discuss the implementation of EE evaluation during a pilot project of two initiatives funded by the same organization and aimed at creating an infrastructure for providing care and assistance for populations affected by substance abuse and mental health issues and victims of child abuse and neglect. In both initiatives, the evaluators took the leadership in the initial evaluation stages while simultaneously educating the community how to conduct their evaluation until the communities developed a sense of ownership of the evaluation. The evolving relationships among empowerment evaluators, funder, and program communities are discussed. Conflict emerged but was handled through dialogue and compromise. Cycles of reflection and action were used as a means to building a learning community "with the capacity to use EE to inform the planning, implementation, and improvement of its initiatives" (p. 156).

In Chapter 6, Livet and Wandersman review the literature on organizational characteristics to identify the characteristics needed for successful program implementation and illustrate how the research findings may be applied by using one of the case examples in Chapter 4. The review is based on Wandersman's et al. Getting to Outcomes model (needs assessment, goals setting, science and best practices, cultural competence, capacity building, planning, process evaluation, outcomes and impact evaluation, total quality management, and sustainability and institutionalization). Three overlapping core areas of organizational functioning are highlighted: structure, processes, and capacities. Three clusters of overall organizational functioning characteristics related to programming success are identified: staff skills and expertise, interpersonal processes, and organizational structure. Organizations need

staff members who are experienced in conducting needs assessment and choosing best practices for program planning, implementation, and maintenance and who have some knowledge or experience about the program chosen. It is crucial that the organization has democratic, egalitarian, and stable leadership that is both empowered and empowering. Decentralized organizational structures increase the likelihood of achieving successful program planning, implementation, and maintenance while centralized structures increase the likelihood of completion of more mechanical and performance oriented tasks.

Assuming the role of a critical friend in chapter 8, Cousins critically examines the state of EE theory and practice by focusing on three questions which address the goals of EE, the form it takes and what makes it different from other approaches, and how one can differentiate a good EE from a bad one. Cousins' critique is logical and illuminating and raises important issues that need to be further addressed by EE theorists and practitioners. For instance, he is puzzled that the unified definition does not address the term "evaluation" and since the case examples presented in the book show strong connections with program development and implementation, one might argue whether EE is truly an evaluation or some kind of evidence-based "change agency" (p. 205). In addition, Cousins discusses the various case examples to show the need to further clarify elements of EE. In the final chapter of the book, Fetterman highlights the main points of the collection and elaborates on the logical sequencing of the ten principles within time and space.

The editors claim that EE is above all about adherence to the ten principles but the case examples show wide variations of the application of the principles which weaken their meaning. For instance, the principle of inclusion states that a broad representation of stakeholders should be involved in the program planning and decision-making but some of the case examples did not include all potential stakeholders: secondary stakeholders were used only as a data source and decisions were primarily made by key stakeholders. Thus, the community's sense of ownership becomes limited to those who make the decisions and secondary stakeholders' sense of ownership is not guaranteed.

The book reveals the complexities, diversities of perspectives, and variations in the implementation of EE. However, the reader remains uncertain whether an aspiring empowerment evaluator should choose Fetterman's three step approach or Wandersman's Getting to Outcomes approach, or a different approach, or whether the approach matters. It would have been useful to know how funding agencies learned about EE and what convinced them to select this approach. Since EE has been used in so many settings and by so many organizations, as Fetterman states, a necessary next step is to research the viability of EE and the implications for evaluation theory and practice. Even though the editors have clearly stated that EE is one evaluation approach out of many, the book does not clarify whether this approach is best suited only to community-based programs that deal with social injustice and inequality issues and whether EE can be successful with communities that are not deprived or marginalized but are willing to internalize evaluation as part of their daily practice. The definition of EE does not limit the approach to any particular organization which implies that any organization or community committed to continuous program improvement could employ EE.

A central concept to EE is empowerment. "EE places the decision-making in the hands of community members" (p. 10) and is designed to enable people to take control over decisions that

affect them. Yet, the case examples provide little information about how power relations are negotiated during EE. Power seems to be discussed mainly in terms of conflict which was resolved through discourse and compromise, providing a rather utopian picture of EE. Power issues in practice are extensively discussed in adult education (see Cervero and Wilson, 2001). Adult education is historically “aligned with the political and social movements that challenge the assumptions of the present” (Cunningham 1993, as cited in Cervero & Wilson, 2001, p. 48) including power relations. Therefore work from AE and HRD could provide valuable insights to the editors of these issues about how to deal with control and power in programs and how learning and self-determination within the program communities occur. Further research and study of how EE works would clarify whether EE is a true evaluation approach, or whether it is a hands-on evaluation training activity.

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***Doing Qualitative Research*, by David Silverman (2nd Edition). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2005, 416 pages, \$ 96.95 (hard cover).**

Similar to the 2000 edition, the second edition of *Doing Qualitative Research* provides a hands-on practical guide for learning the craft of qualitative research that aims to answer all the questions research students ask when beginning their research projects. The principles expressed in the book are born out of David Silverman's experience in supervising qualitative research students in sociology and in teaching *Concepts and Methods of Qualitative Research* (p. xiv). According to Silverman, "the only way to learn craft skills of qualitative research is to apply classroom knowledge about different methodologies to actual data" (p. xv). Silverman has organized his approach to doing qualitative research in eight parts (26 chapters) which guide the reader in selecting qualitative research methodology; shaping and narrowing a research topic and showing "the originality" (p.68) of a thesis; keeping a research diary; writing a research report; and presenting research to different audiences. Practical criteria used in oral PhD examinations and job searches are also discussed in parts 6 and 7. Silverman states that the best research says "a lot about a little problem" (p. 122). He advises research students to make good use of their advisor and to learn from their peers.

Silverman presents qualitative research issues in a unique fashion. One distinct positive characteristic of his guidelines for doing qualitative research is his encouragement to research students to learn and appropriately use both quantitative and qualitative methods based on the research questions. He opposes those researchers who favor only one extreme - either qualitative or quantitative - without considering the usefulness of each research methodology. He argues that advising research students to favor only one methodology is dangerous. The polarities in research paradigms can only serve as "pedagogic devices for students to obtain a first grip on a difficult field" (p. 8) as they learn the jargon of research paradigms. In his view neither qualitative nor quantitative research methodologies are perfect. Silverman asserts that some research problems could be best addressed by using both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. Qualitative methods document the detailed interactions of people and their understandings in one situation whereas quantitative methods identify the variance or "seek detail in certain aspects of correlations between variables" (p. 9). Silverman contends that in selecting quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, answering the questions "what works for me" (p. 8) and what the best methods for the research purpose are is important. Having such neutral orientation or position in social science research is not seen in other research methodology literature, such as that of Holliday (2001) and Hatch (2002) who also aim to provide research skills to novice researchers through step-by-step instruction.

A strength of the book is the overview at the beginning of each chapter and the summary of key skills, the list of further readings, and the glossary of terms at the end of each chapter. Such features make it easy for the reader to search for the parts and chapters of interest. Another strength is the author's self-reflection presented in the preface and in chapter 26. Silverman admits that his intellectual biography in sociology has influenced a great deal of his perspectives

Simmla, B. (2005). [Review of the book *Doing qualitative research*]. *New Horizons in Adult Education*, 19(2), 56-58.

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on qualitative research and suggests that each research student should consult with his or her advisor further if his rules are not relevant to the research student's discipline.

Silverman's approach to qualitative research methodology has some weaknesses. For example, qualitative researchers, such as Merriam et al. (2002), categorize qualitative research into five types (basic qualitative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, case study, and ethnographic study) and three data collection strategies (interview, documents analysis, and observation). These data collection strategies are appropriate to use in qualitative research. However, Silverman does not explicitly classify data collection strategies. In his view, what Merriam et al. (2002) consider data collection strategies, such as interviews, documents/textual analysis and observations, are research methods which can be used in both qualitative and quantitative studies but for different purposes. For example, observation in quantitative research is the "preliminary work [done] prior to framing questionnaires" (p. 111), whereas in qualitative research observation is "fundamental to understanding another culture" (p. 111). In addition, he also considers transcripts as another research method rather than another form of records of data collected from interviews as Merriam et al. (2002) categorize it. Moreover, he points out that (a) there are two models in the research paradigm: model I and II, which shape the meaning of research methods; and (b) the research methods such as interviews, observation, textual analysis and transcripts should be based on the research models. However, he does not define model I and model II. It is not clear whether model I refers to quantitative research and model II to qualitative research or whether both models refer to qualitative research although different case studies are used to explain how to choose a research method. For example, in a case study aimed at monitoring "the progress of HIV-positive patients who were taking the drug AZT (Retrovir)" (p. 113) in a clinic in 1987, Silverman explains that the study's focus "was upon what [the patients] actually did in the clinic rather than what they thought about what they did" (p. 114). Therefore he used observation as the research method. However, it is not clear to the reader which model Silverman used and how that model shaped the observation method in the study. It would have been more helpful to the reader if Silverman had explicitly stated what model I and model II are and how they influence each type of research method. It would have been helpful if he had compared his models to the research methods classified by other qualitative researchers such as Denzin and Lincoln (2000) or Merriam et al. (2002). Thus, in my view, the research methods, models, and qualitative approaches Silverman presents in the book are not as clearly articulated as those of other authors.

The book may also disappoint readers searching for theories and philosophies to frame their qualitative research. Silverman highlights the use of theory for framing a qualitative study as a fundamental element for designing a research project; however, he fails to embrace interpretive paradigms such as interpretivism, constructivism, feminism, critical theory, and Marxist models and cultural theories that structure qualitative research. The definitions of theories, models, and concepts in the book help the reader only to understand what each of these research terms means, but they do not provide knowledge about the theories and the models that can be applied to framing a qualitative research project. Thus, the definitions are not helpful to those research students who need to learn about theories so they can apply them in their particular research. In addition, Silverman's use of gender and cross cultural issues serves as examples about techniques used to balance the closeness and the distance between the researcher and the participants when working in the field rather than bringing the socio-political to the

reader's attention. Given the book's objective to give an initial orientation to research students, the omission of these elements is appropriate. The book contributes to the field of adult education in terms of practice, but not theory. It can be useful as a supplemental material to textbooks of qualitative research methods in adult education courses providing practical knowledge about qualitative research.

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NEWS AND NOTES

American Association for Adult and Continuing Education (AAACE) Annual Conference

Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, November 8-11, 2005

Florida Educational Research Association (FERA) Annual Meeting

Miami, Florida, November 16-18, 2005

Conference website: <http://www.tfn.net/fera/>

Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) 2006 International Conference

Columbus, Ohio, February 22-26, 2006

The deadline for manuscript submission - September 23

Conference website: <http://www.ahrd.org>

American Educational Research Association (AERA) 2006 Annual Meeting

San Francisco, California, April 8-12, 2006

Conference website: <http://www.aera.net/annualmeeting>

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