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A DEVELOPMENTAL STUDY OF ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES
RELATED TO CLOTHING FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

The University of Nebraska - Lincoln

PH.D.

1979

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A DEVELOPMENTAL STUDY OF ADULT EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES
RELATED TO CLOTHING FOR PEOPLE WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

by

Kathy M. Walton

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of

The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska

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Major: Interdepartmental area of
Community and Human Resources

Under the Supervision of Professor Wesley C. Meierhenry

and Professor Lois O. Schwab

Lincoln, Nebraska

December, 1979

TITLE

A Developmental Study of Adult Education Opportunities Related
To Clothing For People With Special Needs

BY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

For people with disabling conditions, everyday activities taken for granted by able-bodied people can become barriers preventing handicapped people from effective interaction within society. One such daily activity or independent living skill is concerned with clothing and the related activities usually associated with clothing, such as: acquisition of clothing, physiological problems with clothing, dressing procedures, and maintenance processes. People professionally active in the clothing field have recognized the severe problems clothing presents to handicapped people and have developed design ideas and features which can help to alleviate some of these clothing concerns. However, research has shown that the information developed by these clothing professionals has not found its way to the people with the needs.

One of the earliest research projects related to clothing for people with special needs showed a general lack of awareness by handicapped people regarding special features for clothing and that anything could be done to make clothing more accessible (Scott, 1958). Such findings have been documented in the United States and England. Gamwell and Joyce (1966) conducted a one-year study in England to identify the clothing needs of people with mental and physical handicaps and people who were ill. Their findings were summarized in their statement:

"It has become apparent that disabled people often do not know what they are entitled to, they do not know what is available, they do not know what they need and they do not know who to ask, or how to go about obtaining help." (p. 65)

In terms of the clothing knowledge of professional people, Gamwell and Joyce summarized:

"Medical staff and persons dealing with the disabled are frequently not as well informed as they would like to be and when looked to for advice are not in a position to give the best information." (p. 65)

A national seminar was held in 1966 in Cleveland, Ohio related to functional clothing for chronically ill and disabled people. The purpose of the seminar was to promote the exchange of existing information and the development of new ideas. It was pointed out that the lack of comfortable and convenient clothing for people with special needs was often overlooked while attention was paid to other rehabilitation problems. It was recommended that a clearinghouse for clothing information be established and that educational opportunities be developed to educate health professionals to special clothing information. To date very little effort has been made to carry out the development of such educational opportunities.

From more recent research it has been documented that people with special needs and professionals working with disabled people have little or no information related to functional clothing (Sindelar, 1969; Yep, 1976; Lamb, 1977; Reich, 1979). The problems presented by clothing are recognized by all; however, the solutions have not been made readily available. Lamb (1977) emphasized:

"There is a need for wider dissemination of helpful information to the handicapped and their families. Researchers who have surveyed handicapped persons often find respondents unaware of what has and can be done to solve some of their problems." (p. 278-283)

At a national conference held in January, 1979 in Birmingham, Alabama, entitled "Clothing for People with Special Needs," it was

pointed out that effective clothing design ideas have been developed to meet specific needs. However, the same conclusion was reached that the information has not reached the people with the special clothing needs or other people directly or indirectly involved in clothing activities. A call was made for coordinated efforts to implement programs designed to disseminate appropriate clothing information.

Historically, emphasis in the rehabilitation field has been placed primarily with medical intervention and vocational training for people with handicapping conditions. Early legislation related to vocational rehabilitation only was directed toward the World War I veteran and later the Smith-Fess Act of 1920 opened the opportunities of providing training for vocational objectives to civilians (Fifty Years of Vocational Rehabilitation, 1970). Philosophical changes occurred over time broadening the types of disabilities which could be included for services and the extent of those services. In 1943, the Barden-LaFollette Act (PL 78-113) was passed and broadened services to include such activities as surgery, hospitalization, subsistence, and transportation while undergoing treatment, training, tools, equipment, and licensing (Conley, 1965). In 1954, the Vocational Rehabilitation Amendments (PL 83-565) expanded funding to include innovative research, training of personnel, and expansion of rehabilitation services. Under this legislation, growth during the 1960's was expansive in terms of facilities, services, and philosophy. A new agency, Social and Rehabilitation Services, was established in 1967 and brought together the various agencies concerned with rehabilitation (Fifty Years, etc., 1970).

In 1973, a new Rehabilitation Act was passed. This act broadened the approach toward the disabled and for the first time, began to look at all factors relevant to the rehabilitation process. It was recognized that disabled people have more problems to cope with besides earning a living. These needs, often referred to as independent living skills, include such components as social activities, home management, consumer knowledge, clothing, sexuality, and educational-vocational opportunities. The 1973 Act mandated that a Comprehensive Needs Study of Severely Disabled People be conducted and the findings of the study showed that independent living was an area of concern which was vital and, as yet, lacking in terms of the services provided for severely disabled individuals (Comprehensive Needs Study, 1975).

In November, 1978, President Carter signed into legislation PL 95-602, the Rehabilitation, Comprehensive Services, and Developmental Disabilities Amendments of 1978. This legislative act recognized independent living as an integral part of any human being's life and, as such, should be included in a comprehensive manner in the education and services involved with disabled individuals. Funding related to independent living was authorized at \$80,000,000 for 1979 increasing to \$200,000,000 by 1981. While appropriate funding legislation has not been passed at this time (and predictions indicate that the actual figures will be reduced), these figures represent the recognized significance of independent living needs for people with handicapping conditions.

The number of people in America in need of education and services has been estimated at approximately 14.1% of the total population

(DeJong, 1979). Based on a total population estimate of 207.3 million Americans (National Center for Health Statistics, 1976), approximately 29,229,000 people have some limitations with daily activity (estimated by the Health Interview Survey, 1974). Other statistics, gathered by the Social Security Administration, estimate a total of 36 million disabled people in America (American Coalition of Citizens with Disabilities, Spring, 1979). The Social Security Administration estimated that approximately \$100 billion was spent each year for dependency care. James F. Garrett, Ph.D., in the foreword of a book by Bitters (1979), stated:

"That the group in need (severely disabled people) is sizable has been established by the Comprehensive Needs Study (authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973). Some 10,000,000 such individuals would seem to be the best estimate, and some \$22.5 billion is being expended on their behalf--but little of it for rehabilitation programs. What is interesting about this is the fact that the Study suggests we have most of the technological know-how to rehabilitate these persons. We are just not deploying our resources in such a manner as to meet the needs. The human as well as the economic costs become staggering."

While the numbers of people involved vary, primarily due to definition variations of "disabled," and the dollars spent on custodial or maintenance costs vary, based on the source of the study and whether public and private sources of funding are included, it is evident that regardless of which figures are used, a great deal of money is spent on such care. This type of care includes such basic activities as being fed, being dressed and groomed, and being moved from one position to another. A basic approach to independent living would be to redistribute some of the "maintenance" funding to educational programs designed to help disabled people learn to better care for themselves. Not only

would this benefit the individual by the self-dignity gained from an ability to function independently or semi-independently, but in the long run maintenance dollars should be reduced. Such an educational system could help cut the costs related to the care of disabled people.

Statement of the Problem

While independent living is a complex and highly interrelated field, one basic aspect of independent living is the area related to clothing. As stated previously, clothing can prevent handicapped people from "mainstreaming" into society, and as yet, educational programs related to clothing have not been adequately designed and presented to such people.

The purpose of this study was to develop and examine a two-step educational model designed to disseminate information related to clothing for people with special needs. Specifically, the objectives of this study were:

- (1) develop and implement an in-service training program for professional people designed to meet their educational needs related to clothing for people with handicapping conditions; and
- (2) develop and implement an adult education course designed for people with handicapping conditions to meet their educational needs related to clothing.

The results of this research should provide direction to clothing professionals in programs designed to disseminate information to all people involved with clothing for people with special needs.

Critical Examination and Delimitation of the Problem

There are many groups of people who can be involved either directly or indirectly with clothing for people with special needs. The groups recognized by this author include:

- (1) the disabled person;
- (2) families and relatives of disabled people;
- (3) rehabilitation professionals and paraprofessionals;
- (4) clothing paraprofessionals such as an alteration person or a public seamstress;
- (5) clothing industry professionals such as fashion designers, manufacturers, and retailers; and
- (6) clothing educators such as extension agents, extension specialists, professors, and researchers.

For the purpose of delimiting this study, it was assumed that the educational opportunities related to functional clothing required by all groups stated above would take two forms: (1) the short-term educational program such as a seminar, workshop, or in-service training, and/or (2) an adult education course. Therefore, to effectively test the above stated educational models, the populations selected to participate in this study were limited to volunteer disabled people and rehabilitation professionals, specifically, the independent living specialists for the State of Nebraska. Because the participants in this study either volunteered or were selected because of their employment situation, the results of this study were not based on a randomized sample, and the conclusions will be limited accordingly.

For purposes of further clarification, two pilot studies were conducted. An adult education opportunity was offered for people with handicapping conditions interested in learning to meet their own clothing needs. This class met once a week from February 3, 1979 to April 28, 1979. The structure of the class followed an andragogical format with people free to pursue their individual needs and interests. The Reich Questionnaire (Appendix B) was used as a needs assessment tool and served to provide information which allowed the instructor to serve as a learning facilitator. Information gathered during the class and from the evaluations indicated that such a format was appropriate for meeting the needs of the clientele and provided direction in the planning process for this study.

The other pilot study dealt with the independent living specialists from the State Division of Rehabilitation Services. These individuals work directly with disabled people throughout the State of Nebraska in providing independent living training. The study conducted was to analyze the clothing needs of the clients of the independent living specialists. The Reich Questionnaire was used as a needs assessment tool and data were collected during the month of April, 1979. The results of this study were compared to the findings of other research projects for similarities and differences. In addition, each independent living specialist was asked to describe specific clothing cases to provide the researcher with information related to the types of clothing problems dealt with by the independent living specialists in their jobs. Such information was used during the planning process for the in-service training program.

Statement of the Objectives

In view of the statement of the problem, the stated delimitations and the pilot studies, the following objectives were formulated for study:

- (1) To develop, implement, and evaluate an educational model for an in-service training session related to clothing for people with special needs.
- (2) To develop, implement, and evaluate an educational model for an adult education course related to clothing for people with special needs.
- (3) To measure the growth of learning related to clothing for people with special needs in the in-service training session and the adult education course. Learning was measured in terms of cognitive or knowledge growth, changes in attitudes toward clothing (affective), and in skill development (motor skill growth).

Definitions

For purposes of clarification, the following definitions were used during this study:

- (1) Androgogy: "the art and science of helping adults learn." (Knowles, 1977).
- (2) Bloom's definitions of learning domains (1971):
Affective Domain: "emphasize a feeling line, an emotion, or a degree of acceptance or rejection."

Cognitive Domain: "Knowledge, involves the recall of specifics and universals, the recall of methods and processes, or the recall of a pattern, structure, or setting."

Perceptual-motor Abilities: "those which enable the (person/child) to do with his muscles what he wants and interests to do." Also referred to as psychomotor skills, defined by Smith (1975): Motor skills learning: "the integration of physical movements from cognitive skills."

- (3) Independent Living: "Any appropriate vocational rehabilitation service and any other service that will enhance the ability of a handicapped individual to live independently and function within his family and community, and, if appropriate, secure and maintain appropriate employment. Such services may include any of the following: counselling services, including psychological, psychotherapeutic, and related services; housing incidental to the purpose of this section (including appropriate accommodations to and modifications of any space to serve handicapped individuals); appropriate job placement services; transportation; attendant care; physical rehabilitation; therapeutic treatment; needed prostheses and other appliances and devices; health maintenance; recreational activities; services for children of preschool age; and appropriate

preventive services to decrease the needs of individuals assisted under the program for similar services in the future." (Title VII, Comprehensive Services for Independent Living, Amendments to the Rehabilitation Act, 1978).

- (4) In-service Training: For the purpose of this study, short-term continuing educational opportunity, usually in the form of a workshop or seminar.
- (5) People With Special Needs: For the purposes of this study, this statement referred to people with physically handicapping conditions.

This research was conducted in Lincoln, Nebraska during the summer of 1979. Facilities and support were provided by the Nebraska Division of Rehabilitation Services in the State Department of Education and the College of Home Economics, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, Nebraska (see Appendix A).

Assumptions

During this research project, the following assumptions were adhered to:

- (1) It was assumed that because each person with a handicapping condition was an individual in terms of type(s) of disability, degree of severity of disability, and combinations of disability, true randomization of samples and/or matching methods for drawing sample populations were unrealistic and therefore were not attempted.

- (2) It was assumed that the individuals currently working as independent living specialists with the Division of Rehabilitation Services, State of Nebraska, were representative of people holding similar positions across the country.
- (3) It was assumed that even though the participants of this study were not randomized, they were somewhat representative of groups of people which could be interested in participating in short-term and/or long-term educational opportunities related to clothing for special needs.
- (4) It was assumed that the instruments used to test learning levels effectively evaluated learning in the cognitive, affective, and psycho-motor domains.
- (5) It was assumed that instruments designed and used as needs assessment and evaluation tools effectively measured the information gained from the tools.

Significance of the Study

The current concern in the field of clothing for people with special needs is that while actual information, designs, and features of clothing have been developed by clothing professionals, few efforts in terms of education have been made to disseminate this information to the people with such needs. This study developed a two-step educational model which could be used for dissemination purposes. The significance of the study is to provide clothing professionals with direction in

terms of appropriateness of educational models. Using such a proven model, clothing professionals would be able to provide educational training to rehabilitation professionals, who in turn, would be better able to implement the second step of the educational model, that of providing clothing information to the people with the special clothing needs.

PREVIEW