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**Report of an Educational Psychology Internship at the REFERRAL, EDUCATION,
ASSESSMENT, AND DEVELOPMENT FOR YOU CENTRE, including a research report**

on

**Factors Contributing Toward Goal Completion for Adult Basic Education Students: A
Motivational Profile of REFERRAL, EDUCATION, ASSESSMENT, AND
DEVELOPMENT FOR YOU CENTRE Students**

by

James Darryl Fost

**An Internship Report submitted to the School of Graduate Studies
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
Degree
of
*Master of Education***

**FACULTY OF EDUCATION
MEMORIAL UNIVERSITY OF NEWFOUNDLAND**

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ABSTRACT

This is a report of an Educational Psychology internship at The REFERRAL, EDUCATION, ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FOR YOU CENTRE, from April 28 to July 28, 1997.

The introduction addresses the program options available and why this graduate student considered the internship the most appropriate for him. The introduction also addresses the internship setting, the internship goals, and the supervision and evaluation of the internship.

Chapter Two describes the activities carried out by the intern to meet the goals.

The research component, focused on responses selected from a seventy-item questionnaire regarding possible reasons for participation in Adult Basic Education, by twenty- two REFERRAL, EDUCATION, ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FOR YOU CENTRE students. Data for the research component were collected through the administration of a two-part survey; one was to gather socio-demographic information (refer to Appendix B, *Background Information Sheet*), and the other consisted of questions which attempted to operationalize the concept "reasons for participation" (refer to Appendix C, *Motivational Profile Questionnaire*).

Responses were separated into four categories: demographic, program, situational, and psychological. Of the four possible variables the research concluded that, for this particular population presently attending the REFERRAL, EDUCATION, ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT FOR YOU CENTRE, both psychological and situational variables were the most instrumental motivating forces toward their return and contribution in Adult Basic Education.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank all those at the R.E.A.D.Y Centre who participated in the survey. I wish everyone the best of luck in their future endeavours.

Finally, a special thank you to Shelley L. Brown. To her I owe much gratitude and appreciation. Without her continued encouragement and support this paper may never have been completed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Rationale for Internship

One of the program options available for graduate students pursuing the Master of Education Degree in Educational Psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland is participation in an internship. The internship consists of a twelve-week placement in an approved professional setting and is intended to permit the intern to gain further practical experience in the educational psychology field. In addition to the wide range of professional activities in which interns are typically expected to engage, they are also required to conduct a research study deemed appropriate to such a field placement. The study must be integrated into the internship exercise and provide an opportunity for interns to systematically examine some aspect of their professional service.

The following criteria were developed by the Educational Psychology graduate program to establish the appropriateness and implementation of the internship:

1. It commences only after a satisfactory performance is achieved in an approved practicum.
2. It commences only after successful completion of all course work (including practicum) required for the degree program as defined by the University Calendar.
3. First consideration will be given to candidates who have had little experience in the working milieu which they will enter.
4. Interested students must submit and have approved by the Ethics Committee, a formal

internship proposal, including among other points, a statement of professional goals and expectations for the internship.

5. An intern must be enrolled full-time during the time of his/her internship, she or he may not receive reimbursement for services rendered during the internship, but will be eligible for fellowships and assistantships as provided by University regulations.

An internship at a post-secondary institution was considered most appropriate by this intern for the following reasons:

1. It would allow the intern to gain practical experience in assessment and counselling and to apply theoretical concepts learned during the formal part of the program.
2. It would provide opportunities for the intern to receive direct professional supervision in assessment, counselling, and many other professional activities.
3. The intern would be given the opportunity to broaden his knowledge about the educational psychology profession so that he would be better able to direct his future career development.
4. A post-secondary placement would provide the intern with the opportunity to become familiar with test instruments designed specifically for adults, and to apply previously learned counselling techniques to the adult population.

The Internship Setting

Prior to choosing the internship setting, the following issues had to be considered by the intern:

1. The quality of professional supervision available at the internship setting.

2. The quality of learning opportunities and experiences likely to be available at the setting.
3. The relevancy to, and usefulness of, such experiences in the actual setting in which the intern ultimately expected to work.
4. The availability of time for full-time involvement of the intern for a minimum of twelve consecutive weeks.
5. Availability of a qualified on-site supervisor.
6. Ready access to a Faculty supervisor during the internship period.

While the other options of portfolio, thesis, and special project have their merits as theoretical and scholarly documents, they would not have afforded the intern the opportunity to apply counselling skills in a supervised setting. In a practical sense, there was an advantage in applying the knowledge attained. Being asked to apply learned skills as a counsellor and receive feedback on the intern's effectiveness from the field supervisor was a positive experience. The major advantage of this was that it allowed the intern to refine learned skills and it contributed to the development of the intern's personal counselling style. The process allowed the intern to apply learned skills in psycho educational assessment, as well as individual, group, and career counselling.

The R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE was chosen as the setting for the internship. R.E.A.D.Y is an acronym for Referral, Education, Assessment and Development for You. The R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE is a branch of the Community Services Council and is presently located at 365 Water Street, St. John's, NF.

The R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE is an Adult Basic Education (A.B.E.) Program, which opened late in 1990 and accepted its first participants/students on Jan. 3, 1991. The program was

established by the Community Services Council (CSC) of Newfoundland and Labrador as a result of research the CSC carried out cooperatively with the Department of Social Services, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, and the Department of Career Development. The Centre is currently funded under the Department of Social Services (DOSS) Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

The Centre was originally set up as a youth program to work with young people who needed assistance in making the transition from school to the world of work. The role of the Centre has been changing in response to the referral needs of the Department of Social Services. The Centre now serves adults of all ages. Their primary objective is to deliver the provincial program of Adult Basic Education (A.B.E.).

The R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE offers outreach services, social work counselling, career planning, and placement counselling. Referrals for the program are accepted exclusively from the Provincial Department of Social Services. The intake process is continuous throughout the year, maintaining an enrollment of 60 students.

Supervision and Evaluation of Intern

The responsibility for the supervision of the intern was shared by the Faculty of Education at Memorial University and the Coordination of the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE.

The Field Supervisor had the following responsibilities:

1. To consult with the intern and his Faculty Supervisor during the period when his internship proposal was being developed.
2. To have primary responsibility for the on going supervision of the intern's assessment and

counselling activities.

3. To facilitate the intern's access to appropriate professional opportunity, and to professional personnel at the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE essential to a full and successful internship experience.
4. To meet with the intern and the Faculty Supervisor midway through the internship period to assess the intern's progress, and determine any needed changes in the internship.

Faculty of Education Supervisor

The Faculty of Education Supervisor was responsible for assisting the intern in the preparation of the internship proposal, including the research component. He collaborated and consulted with the Field Supervisor during the internship period; was readily available for consultations both during and after the internship; and supervised the research project.

Supervisors

Faculty of Education Supervisor: Dr. William Kennedy, B.A. (St. Mary's), B.Ed. (Dalhousie), M.A. (St. Francis Xavier), Ph.D. (Alberta).

Field Supervisor: Mr. Rick Engram, B.A. (MUN), B.Ed. (MUN).

Supervision and evaluation were conducted in the following manner:

1. Regular meetings were held with the Field Supervisor to discuss the progress of the intern during the internship.
2. During the fifth week of the internship, Dr. Kennedy met with Mr. Engram and the intern to assess the intern's progress.
3. The intern also conversed with Dr. Kennedy on several occasions throughout the

internship period to discuss the developments of the research project the intern had undertaken.

Internship Goals

The ultimate goal for the internship was to gain further practical experience which would enhance the professional growth and development of the intern. To achieve this, a number of specific goals were identified and pursued. These goals include:

1. To become familiar with the programs and services provided by the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE.
2. To become familiar with the duties and services provided by the staff.
3. To gain experience in offering personal, academic, and career counselling to students of the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE, and further develop knowledge of counselling theories.
4. To develop collaborative relationships and consult, where appropriate, with teachers, coordinators, and social workers, concerning individual students.
5. To complement the overall objectives and philosophies of the school.
6. To administer and interpret a wide variety of psychological tests, including aptitude, interest, achievement, and intelligence tests.
7. To become familiar with issues that students of ABE encounter in both their academic and social lives.
8. To develop an area of research focused on determining what factors can be contributed in motivating ABE students toward goal completion.

CHAPTER II

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

This section of the report describes the activities carried out by the intern for the internship period of April 28 to July 28, 1997.

Career Counselling

The intern was involved in counselling many students about possible career choices upon their successful completion at the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE. Due to the wide range of experiences as well as ages for this particular group of students, the intern encountered a diverse number of issues. Some of the important issues for a majority of those seeking advice were about job prospects, making the right decision regarding occupational training, the length of a training program, determining which schools offered specific programs, and whether they could receive such training while on social assistance.

While the intern was responsible for career counselling, other staff members were also assigned students whom they worked closely with, monitoring both their academic needs as well as possible career paths.

To assist the intern in helping clients to decide on a possible career path, career searches on the Internet were used in conjunction with Interest Inventories. By allowing clients to work through such activities guided by the intern, students were able to gain a better and deeper understanding of themselves. In working with inventories and check lists, students became more aware of their own interests and in doing so, could decide more clearly what they may enjoy as a career.

Throughout the internship, the intern also had to familiarize himself with the

administration, scoring, and interpretation of several standardized tests for career counselling purposes. One such standardized test included the General Aptitude Test Battery (GATB). Aptitude tests are important because they have the potential to identify abilities a person may not be aware of. Aptitude tests may also encourage the development of special or potential abilities of an individual and provide information to assist a person in making educational and career decisions or other choices between competing alternatives. Given that many of the clients who sought career counselling services were unaware of their abilities, the GATB proved to be a useful tool for such students.

Many of the clientele did not realize that their interests related to many types of careers and jobs. The intern assisted students to focus their attention on what they could do in order to reach these goals.

It was observed by the intern that many students had difficulty in deciding what they wanted to pursue. They all wanted to be doing something and earn enough to support their families, yet were not entirely aware of how to begin.

Many of the clients which the intern came in contact with had worked at various jobs. In most cases they had been working "odd" jobs for the last five to ten years. There were also a large majority who, since leaving school, had not had any form of employment and were living on support from social assistance.

Academic Counselling

The intern often counselled students with regards to academics. Issues included how long before completion of a particular unit, prerequisites, course selections, what is required to complete a unit, who is teaching that unit, and the grade required to pass.

The intern assisted students in the form of counselling, discussion, and suggestion. Throughout the internship, the intern provided students with tips and suggestions for better review and work habits. Also, the intern helped the students with organizing their schedules, prioritizing, and breaking down the workload so that it did not appear overwhelming. The intern also assisted students in preparing for different subjects, the organization of their exercise books, and studying for an upcoming quiz.

It was observed that the majority of students required information on how to learn, and how to develop better study skills. It was with this in mind, that the intern, with the assistance of two other staff members developed and implemented a Study Skills Course. From the numerous meetings with students concerning academics, it was also observed by the intern that there was a need for students to develop greater self confidence and feelings about their ability to achieve.

Personal Counselling

The internship provided the opportunity for the intern to further develop his listening and communication skills. Through numerous sessions, both in the office and the classroom, students related to the intern their past, present, and future fears. Many of the clientele had discontinued their schooling due to a number of issues. Many, for example, did not enjoy school and remembered their school days as boring, frightening, and very difficult. Others left school to find

work to support a family. The responses why this particular group of students left school are as diverse as this population itself.

From past recollections of school, the intern learned that many of the clients had to deal with learning disabilities, reading difficulties, and low academics. This, in conjunction with an increasing sense of low self esteem, created overwhelming pressures on many of these students. It was observed by the intern that issues surrounding self esteem, feeling good about oneself, and the motivation to achieve were all important factors to this population of adult learners. The intern also observed that these issues were still present and would need to be addressed.

Study Skills Course

The intern, along with two other staff members, developed a course regarding the skills to better study habits. The course contained information concerning the following issues: work space, time management, prioritizing, organization, scanning techniques, highlighting, sequencing, reading then reviewing, taking notes, and asking questions. Before the study skills course began, the intern had students look at their old work habits, and what may attribute to successful learning, and possible reasons why they did not acquire information. The intern had discussions on learning and how everybody learns differently. Students were informed about the various ways of learning through oral, visual, or "hands on" types of presentations.

The intern observed that all of the students benefited from the study skills course. Of those involved, many were selected based on past difficulties they were having in the program. It was apparent that many did not acquire the skills in school required to become successful

academically. The knowledge gained about different types of learners, how to take notes and what to look for while studies were seen as beneficial, for both the students as well as the intern.

The course concluded with a “hands on” search of articles and books at Memorial’s Queen Elizabeth library. This experience gave students an opportunity to use some of the skills learned in the course. For many, it was their first time in a library, and at first, were frightened at the prospect of looking for a book. The intern is satisfied that the overall course benefited those involved.

Tutoring

The intern was involved with all students on a daily basis through tutoring. During the internship, the intern was assigned a number of students to provide assistance. This assistance was given in the form of monitoring, reading teacher notes, oral testing, encouragement, copying notes, photocopying assignments, checking homework, maintaining on task behaviours, clarification of teachers’ instructions, and modifying the curriculum to meet the needs of particular students. Modifying a curriculum meant decreasing the workload, increasing the amount of time allotted to complete the subject, providing mini quizzes, and allowing opportunities to repeat a failed quiz.

Tutoring also provided the intern with opportunities to gain the confidence of students he would otherwise not see on a regular basis. It provided venues in which the intern was able to gain more exposure among the students, winning both their trust and faith.

Staff Meetings

Through weekly staff meetings, the intern was able to gain a greater appreciation of the role of ABE and its mission. How services could be better allocated, what services were available, and who would put forth these services were all part of weekly meetings.

At staff meetings, the intern became familiar with such issues as: student progress reports, student contracts, early withdrawal, incoming students, end dates, attendance records, behaviour problems, academics, and other issues of a more personal nature, such as, why a student has been absent for an extended period of time. Meetings were held only after all students had left the building. All sessions were confidential and decisions that affected a student were voted on by all staff members.

Each student upon admission to the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE is assigned a staff member as their main contact person. This staff member becomes known as the student's broker. The broker will relay any new information about this student at staff meetings. The broker is a voice for the student. The broker is also someone the student can go to if they have concerns about course selection, grades, and other matters.

During the internship, the intern was assigned anywhere between seven and ten students to be a broker. It was the responsibility of the intern to record the progress of those students, monitor their course selections, and course completions. The intern was responsible for recording a student's progress and presenting it at the weekly meetings. If the intern had concerns about particular students it was necessary to enlighten other staff who could help and assist the student, as well as, the broker.

Contracting

The intern was responsible for monitoring the contracts of three students. Contracts are conditions that are set up between a student and the staff members. In all cases, contracting is seen by staff members as a “last resort” to encourage the student to “get back on track”. Students who are required to sign a contract have fallen behind in their work and now they are agreeing to get the work done or they will be required to leave the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE. As observed by the intern, in most cases contracting was an effective method of disciplinary action. Contracting meant that students were now assuming responsibility for their actions. Those students for whom the intern acted as broker did successfully finish their program.

Psycho-Educational Assessment

The intern had only one request for a psycho-educational assessment while completing his internship at the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE. A student was falling behind in all subject areas and appeared to be spending enormous amounts of time on reading their material over many times and yet failing when tested.

Prior to administering an assessment, the intern set up an interview with the student. The purpose of this initial interview was to establish rapport with the client and to obtain relevant background information which may be of use to the intern when analysing the results of the assessment and making recommendations.

Following the interview, the nature of the referral determined which assessment tools the intern would administer. In this case where it was expected that a learning disability may exist, the intern administered both an intelligence test and an achievement test. It is suggested that a

discrepancy in scores obtained on both measures is considered the most valid indicator that a learning disability may exist (Lerner, 1995). The Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (WAIS-R) was the intelligence test employed in this case. The intern used this instrument because of its excellent validity, high reliability, and good administration procedures (Sattler, 1992). The achievement tests used for the assessments could have included the Woodcock Johnson-Revised (WJ-R), the Wechsler Individual Achievement Test (WIAT), and the Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (K-TEA). The specific achievement measure depended on such factors as the scores and pattern of scores obtained on the WAIS-R, the nature of the referral, the age of the client, and time constraints.

Report Writing

After completing any of the assessments, the intern would score, interpret, and write up a psycho-educational report. This report would include such things as identifying information, reason for referral, test results, interpretation, and a summary with recommendations. A copy of these results was provided to the student, and in cases where the student consented, a copy was provided for instructors.

Post-Assessment Interview

Once the intern wrote the psycho-educational report, he then scheduled a post-assessment interview with the student. The purpose of scheduling such an interview was to explain the results of the assessment to the student and answer any questions. A concern voiced by the intern's client during the initial interview sessions, was a belief that their academic difficulties were attributable to intellectual deficiencies. However, scores obtained on the WAIS-R provided

evidence of a person to be of at least average intelligence. The intern ensured that the client was aware of this fact during the post assessment interview. The client expressed relief upon hearing this information because they believed themselves to be a slow learner who was not capable of mastering the school curriculum. The intern also explained the difference between intelligence and achievement, and provided an explanation as to why they may not be achieving at a level which was predicted by their respective IQ scores.

Reading

The intern read extensively throughout the internship period. These readings included, but were not restricted to, the areas of assessment and assessment tools, career counselling techniques, substance abuse, rape/sexual assault, job search skills, stress management, and assessment techniques.

Other Activities

As an intern practising at the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE, other duties beyond assessment and counselling were assigned. These duties included answering student inquiries about financial aid, admission procedures, and general program information. The intern was also expected to attend regular staff meetings.

Review of the Objectives

Goal 1: To become familiar with the programs and services provided by the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE.

This was accomplished by reading the calendar program followed by the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE, interacting on a daily basis with personnel, discussions with Mr. Rick Engram, and participating in staff meetings.

Goal 2: To become familiar with the duties and services provided by the staff of the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE.

This was accomplished through regular attendance at staff meetings, working with individual teachers, meetings with the coordinator, and discussions with the social worker. During the internship, the intern spent much time inquiring about specific duties that each person, from secretary to coordinator, were responsible for.

Goal 3: To gain experience in offering personal, academic, and career counselling to students of the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE and further develop knowledge of counselling theories and techniques.

This was accomplished through the consistent and continuous interaction between the intern and the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE students about personal, academic, and career concerns. As a broker and tutor, the intern was able to meet more students that would not normally seek out his services. In doing so, the intern became more visible and accessible to a wider range of students. Through extensive reading in the areas of personal, academic, and career counselling the intern was able to reach his goal.

Goal 4: To develop collaborative relationships and consult, where appropriate, with

teachers, coordinators, and social workers concerning individual students.

This was accomplished through meetings with staff members as a collective group as well as meeting with personnel on a one to one basis concerning individual ABE students. While at the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE, the intern felt many issues regarding students required a collaborative team effort, and there were occasions in which confidentiality was requested on behalf of the student. When this occurred, the intern sought advice from colleagues outside the workplace while continuing to protect the right of confidentiality of the student.

Goal 5: To complement the overall objectives and philosophies of the school.

This was accomplished by reading numerous articles concerning pedagogy and discussions with staff and coordinators. There was a concentrated effort by the intern to ensure that his students were an integral part of the school philosophy and that they were encouraged to meet the educational objectives which contribute to a positive e school environment.

Goal 6: To administer and interpret a wide variety of psychological tests, including aptitude, interest, achievement, and intelligence tests.

This was accomplished through the administration and interpretation of the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Scale-Revised (WAIS-R), Kaufman Test of Educational Achievement (K-TEA), the Strong Campbell Interest Inventory (SCII), and the Self-Directed Search (SDS).

Goal 7: To become familiar with issues that students of ABE encounter in both their academic and social lives.

This was accomplished through regular staff meetings, discussions with a social worker and conversations with students.

Goal 8: To develop an area of research focused on determining what factors can be

contributed in motivating ABE students toward goal completion.

This was accomplished through an initial research on the topic and presentation of a draft proposal, the collection of relevant data in the form of questionnaires, analysis and interpretation of results of the data, and the compilation of a final research report with recommendations.

Conclusion

This Chapter has presented an overall description of the internship and the professional activities of the intern during this period. Overall, the intern believes that the 12-week internship was a valuable experience and that each of the eight major internship goals were met. It provided the intern with more experience in administering, scoring, and interpreting standardized tests, and with personal and career counselling. More important, it provided the opportunity to gain experience working with the adult population in the capacity of an educational psychologist. Prior to this internship, the intern had worked primarily with students in the K-12 school system. Working with the adult population required the intern to become familiar with various assessment batteries, personal and career issues specific to this group, and to develop different approaches when working with the adult learners.

CHAPTER III

STUDY OVERVIEW

Statement of Purpose

To fulfill the requirements for the internship in the educational psychology program at Memorial University of Newfoundland, one must undertake a research project appropriate to the particular setting. The intern decided to examine factors that may contribute toward goal completion for mature students, in particular, those students who are presently attending the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE.

This study also represents an attempt to give a voice to learners, to allow them to tell us what they hope to achieve through their attendance at the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE, as well as, gain a better understanding of the reasons why this particular group of students chose to participate in Adult Basic Education. Finally, it is hoped that through such responses, the dynamic forces which are operating to motivate these students will be better understood and add to present day literature and research.

Significance of the Study

Students applying to the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE are accepted into the school based on two conditions: (1) they have not completed the required courses to have successfully graduated from high school, and (2) that they are referred exclusively from the Human Resources Department (HRDC), formally known as the Department of Social Services (DOSS). The intake process is continuous throughout the year, maintaining an enrollment of sixty students. Their primary goal is to deliver the provincial program of Adult Basic Education.

Originally, the Centre was set up as a youth program to work with young people who needed assistance in making the transition from school to work. Because of referral needs, the Centre has changed its objectives and deals exclusively with educating adults who have not received their high school diploma.

Students who are referred by DOSS and are eventually accepted as a potential student must first complete a screening process conducted by the coordinator of the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE. It is during the initial screening that the needs of the student are assessed. These needs may range from their entrance level into the program to confidential information regarding daycare, medication, and possible learning disabilities. Once the student accepts the conditions set out by the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE they are permitted to begin the program.

The significance of this study is to explore factors which may contribute to a student returning to school and whether these factors are similar to those which influence the student to continue until goal completion. Many R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE students have been out of school for a number of years, so why are they making the decision to return? Are monetary benefits they receive every two weeks from HRDC enough to motivate their return and continuance in ABE, and if so, how much weight can one place on this factor? The intern wished to explore the construct of motivation in regards to R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE students who were presently attending the program for a period of longer than six months.

The intern believed this was an important study to undertake after informal observations indicated that the majority of students expressed other reasons for why they were intent on returning to school, aside from the biweekly monetary benefits. Informal observations also showed that a large number of R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE clientele would continue in the program even

if they did not receive additional monies from HRDC. For many students, there appeared to be other variables that would inspire and motivate their continuance. Although monetary gains may have initially motivated these students, it was observed that money is not what pushes them toward their goals. For some students, the biweekly benefits are important; is it possible that this group will drop out of the program before others?

Overall, the intern felt it important to explore motivations for participation for students presently attending the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE. By addressing some of the factors that may contribute to why adults return to school may help us determine what factors influence participation and persistence. According to Beder and Valentine (1990), one of the most difficult tasks confronting program planners in adult education is helping adults overcome the forces that deter their participation.

It may be possible, through increased research on ABE motivation, to encourage participation, to decrease drop out, and break down barriers that may separate potential students from continuing their education. Education brings with it more than possible job opportunities and financial gain, it also increased self awareness, raises self esteem, and promotes psychological growth.

Limitations of the Study

In addressing the analysis of the data there are a number of factors which must be taken into consideration. Data gathered from this study and results are valid for this particular group of twenty-two participants at the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE. Insights can be applied to groups of similar students and hopefully some of the recommendations will possibly aid in motivating these and future ABE students.

What has been recorded are students' responses to questions. But a questionnaire can be limiting. Also, the wording of the questions themselves perhaps could have been interpreted differently by the participants based on their own experiences, age, and gender. The interpretation of their answers occurred through the eyes of one researcher.

The results of this study have revealed some interesting relationships, however, due to the selection and size of this sample, extreme caution should be exercised in attempting to generalize these findings. Replication within other institutions and across various educational levels may establish greater external validity.

Because students were only administered a questionnaire in which they were required to respond not true, somewhat true, and very true, responses may have been somewhat superficial and perhaps socially desirable. Consequently, in order to gain a deeper understanding of the many variables affecting a student's decision to attend ABE, it is suggested that future research involve open-ended questions and interviews. Such research lends itself to a deeper understanding of those involved. Responses would allow themselves to be probed, giving the researcher a clearer insight into those who are involved in the study. Responses such as, "I decided to return to school to receive my high school diploma", could be expanded in a number of ways. Further questioning might reveal why they want their high school diploma and how graduating with a GED would change their life. Such responses would provide the researcher with a more in-depth look at the psychological, social, and situational needs of this particular population.

CHAPTER IV

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Investigation into motivational factors in Adult Basic Education programs is warranted by the phenomenal drop out rate in adult literacy programs. According to Harman and Balmuth (1987), as cited in (Dubois, 1989), 50 - 70% of adults entering a literacy program drop out before they reach their goal. According to Lalicky and Norman (1994), research generally shows that participation rates are low and drop out rates are high in adult literacy programs. In their three year Canadian study they examined the participation patterns of adults in literacy programs, as well as past school experiences and reasons for entering and leaving literacy programs. Approximately 90% of the forty participants reported having difficulties in school, twenty-two stated family problems, fourteen expressed personal and psychological difficulties, and thirty-four mentioned learning problems. Garrison (1985), says that ABE students are four times more likely to drop out than other adult education students.

Watson (1983), states that “scholars in the field of adult education seem to have reached a consensus on the severity of the drop out problem in basic education programs and the corresponding need for research”. She cites Depietro (1975), as saying that “investigation is sorely needed to ascertain causes and/or contributing factors for the low attendance and the high drop out incidence observed in ABE programs” (pp.25-26). Jones, Sculman, and Stubblefield (1978), and Boshier (1973) cited in Watson (1983), called for more research on persistence in ABE programs. Boshier said that “the absence of testable theory has crippled adult education participation and drop out research for decades” (p.26). Previous demographic studies on

situational variables have yielded inconclusive and contradictory results and investigators have stressed the need for more original research (Watson, 1983).

Myers (1988), comments on the lack of useful literature and research: “without more informative literature and research, attrition cannot be studied thoroughly, and drop out rates cannot be reduced” (p.21). Myers also acknowledges the difficulty in studying persistence in ABE because it is often discussed with related topics such as participation and retention.

While Beder (1990) states there has been considerable attention devoted to the general phenomenon of participation in the context of “who participates and why”, for this graduate, motivational influences and variables may vary in accordance with those involved and therefore, research in this area, is still valuable.

According to Beder and Valentine (1990), most participation theories assume that adult education is a voluntary activity in which learners engage in, in order to meet needs and goals. Critical to such notions is the concept of motivation, implicitly defined as the basic reasons which lead learners to participate. The best work in this area recognizes both the diversities of motivational orientations among groups of participants as well as the multifaceted nature of motivation for any given individual. Of the numerous studies of motivation, Houle (1961) was especially influential. Houle’s seminal research in adult education suggested that participants could be divided into three broad groups: the goal oriented, the activity oriented, and the learning oriented. Later work by Boshier (1971, 1976), Morstain and Smart (1974), Boshier and Collins (1985), and Clayton and Smith (1987) employed qualitative survey methods in an attempt to establish the generalizability of a motivational framework, as well as to discover a relationship between motivational orientations and various socio-demographic variables. The importance of

this latter pursuit in understanding participation behaviour was, that it was reasonable to expect different subgroups within any broad instructional population to exhibit different configurations of motivations, depending on their circumstances and life situations.

According to Valentine and Darkenwald (1986), literacy education is much more than an instrumental activity where skills were being acquired. According to their research, for the vast majority, studying and passing the GED (General Educational Development) was viewed as a worthwhile endeavour.

Reasons for Drop Out

Although research by Dubois (1989) and Beder (1990) offered reasons why some adult learners drop out before completing their goals while others persist, they also provided evidence and support toward factors affecting a student's progress and motivation. Factors provided by Beder and Valentine (1990), Morstain and Smart (1974), and others include: intelligence, age, race, sex, marital status, parents' educational level, prior educational level, and scholastic ability. Other factors include: prior diagnosis of learning disabilities, time to complete one's goals, prior positive/negative school experiences, goal setting, determination, self-esteem, locus of control, support, availability of counselling, making progress, finances, economic status, family situation, lack of time, quality of instruction, availability of a tutor, class size, and class scheduling.

There has also been much research conducted by Valentine and Darkenwald (1990) about deterrents to adult education. They have also explored perceptions that adult learners have about themselves and their lives. Dubois, in her 1989 study, mentioned fear (largely due to prior school

experiences), time, and a lack of support as major barriers to learning and the motivation to learn. In her qualitative study of the attitudes and perceptions of twenty-nine adult literacy students in Columbus, Ohio, which followed an earlier study she had done with Van Tilburg in 1988, that also interviewed twenty-nine in London, England, she determined that a number of motivating factors may exist for this particular sector of students. She found factors that motivated students for those interviewed were: support (both from family and teachers), success, having a goal, determination, and increased self-esteem. Age was also related to goals, for example those in their early 20s mostly entered with the hopes of being able to get a job down the road. Those in their 20s and 30s hoped to eventually get a job, but also wanted their children to be proud of them.

Variables affecting Continuation

Dubois (1989), also found that the majority of older students that enrolled in ABE were motivated toward self-improvement. Most of the factors influencing persistence for these students seemed to be psychological. Similarly, Myers (1988) in a study that she helped research with Fingeret (1985), found that improved self-esteem, internal locus of control, having a definite goal, regular attendance, and support were all important factors for motivation and perseverance. Jha (1991), studied data from the records of 2,323 students enrolled in ABE through a Midwestern, urban community college over a two-year period and unlike Watson's (1983) finding that age was the most important factor in persistence, Jha saw age as having no bearing on continuation. Jha also found that females tend to stop and then re-enroll more than males. Although this research appears to support each other in determining the existence of a multitude

of variables there is still some hesitancy to come to a consensus. This presents a dilemma: although Adult Basic Education programs are reaching a much larger percentage of the population than they currently were, we still see many students within this group discontinue before completing their program. In order to understand this unique group of individuals, it is necessary to come to some sort of agreement on variables and factors which influence and motivate the adult learner.

Researchers such as Valentine and Darkenwald (1990) have been asking "How as program planners can we help adults overcome the forces that can impinge on motivation and deter their participation?" As mentioned, the professional literature of adult education has given much attention to barriers or deterrents. Valentine and Darkenwald (1990), have also suggested that in doing so we are stopping at the point of identifying the broad dimensions of deterrence and thereby masking individual differences and leaving critically important questions unanswered. For example, which part of the population is lack of confidence a major deterrent in the motivation of participants? Or are potential learners who are deterred by cost deterred by a lack of time? Even as Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984) observed, "motivational orientation factors may not even prove useful in distinguishing participants from non-participants" (p.155).

Scanlan (1986), in a careful and comprehensive review of the literature on deterrents, suggested that there were six categories of deterrents that emerged in most settings and most populations. Those six categories were: a) individual, family and home related problems, b) cost concerns, c) questionable worth or relevance of educational opportunities, d) negative perceptions of the value of education, e) lack of motivation or indifference to learning and, f) lack of confidence. According to Valentine and Darkenwald (1990), "two things to keep in mind while

examining this issue is the notion that deterrence and motivation encompass both psychological factors as well as social forces and that deterrents are not the mirror images of motivations nor are they distinct" (p.36).

Adult basic education is one setting where the adult learner must be studied from a more holistic perspective. This is especially so when one considers the various socioeconomic and situational demands that are continually placed upon this type of student. It is clearly evident that the social lives of many ABE students are filled with family and socioeconomic responsibilities and commitments. Hayes (1988), went as far as suggesting that the ABE student is not as likely to have the same need or time to develop meaningful social relationships at school. In other words, ABE students may be more concerned with meeting the requirements of the institution instead of seeing it as a social retreat.

Considering the responsibilities of the ABE student it is both necessary as well as essential that ABE programs be evaluated. Considering the difficulty of having to find the time and resources for school, an important motivating factor would seem to be that adult learners perceive the curriculum as relevant to their goals. This is consistent with Knowles' findings (1973), who believed that the adults' time perspective is one of immediacy of application and the curriculum should be organized around relevant problem areas.

Hayes (1988), attempted to go beyond the basic description by factor analysis of the reasons given for nonparticipation in ABE. The findings derived from a sample of 160 ABE students indicated five basic deterrents: low self confidence, negative attitude toward classes, social disapproval, low personal priority, and situational factors. According to Fingeret's findings (1983), low perception of need have been correlated with age. It appears that as adults advance

in age, their perception of need for education decreases. This finding may be useful in explaining, in part, why efforts to attract older adults often meet with little success.

With the exception of situational factors, Hayes (1988) discovered that nonparticipation in ABE may also be related to the students' attitudes and perceptions of ABE. This might suggest that in order to attract such individuals, incentives may be warranted. It may also prove necessary to "change" the image of Adult Basic Education or at least modify participants' perceptions of ABE. Research has suggested that a low perception of need may also be translated into a low motivation to attend. Perhaps, as educators, it is necessary to explore such perceptions and how they act as deterrents. In doing so, it may be possible to increase this particular population's need awareness. If students could see the benefits of ABE in the "real context" it may convince and motivate them to attend. By changing public awareness we may actually create an incentive where future students may actually see what furthering their knowledge base can do for them. By taking an abstract concept such as education and providing concrete examples of its benefits, students may see its relatedness in their own lives.

According to Watson (1983) and Cramer (1982), age and academic achievement have also been shown to have an impact on motivation and whether or not adults continue in an ABE program until completion. Studies looking at the impact of age on continuation and completion of ABE goals have often been both contradictory and inconclusive. Watson (1983), found that age was a factor in persistence, and determined that older students were more likely to persist. Jha (1991) however, found that age was not a factor even though she cites a number of studies linking younger adults with attrition (Anderson and Darkenwald, 1979; Boshier, 1973; Bosma, 1988; Smith, 1985; and Weisel, 1980) and persistence with age (Anderson and Darkenwald, 1979;

Cramer, 1982). Fasig and Jones (1979), concluded that non-persisters tended to be older (age 45 and above), female, and unemployed. Employment was also correlated with withdrawal and persistence in studies cited by Jha in 1991: Anderson and Darkenwaid (1979), Bosma (1988), and Meyer (1974). Jha also mentioned that Boshier (1973) determined that unmarried students were more likely to drop out of ABE than married students.

Moore (1982), decided that the last grade completed in school was a significant factor in determining whether students will persist to complete their GED. Garrison (1985) also felt that the last grade completed in school, as well as the number of hours worked, seemed to play a role in persistence.

Jha (1991) listed class size as having an effect on perseverance in ABE. Garrison (1985) looked at course relevancy and goal clarity and found that ABE students who thought that classes were relevant and were clearer about their goals often completed their program. However, he also found that ABE students often set unrealistic goals for themselves and set themselves up for possible failure. This seems to suggest that ABE students are aware of the value of setting goals, yet are unaware of what has to be done in order to reach these goals. As Dubois (1989) states, "having a goal as well as support is important" (p.51). Myers (1988), also determined that having a definite goal was an important factor in persistence. Watson (1988) on the other hand, concluded those reasons for enrolling was not a factor in motivating a student to persist.

Dubois (1989), also talked about prior school experiences in her interviews with ABE students. According to Dubois, "school for most of them had not been enjoyable, therefore, returning to school meant facing the past squarely and choosing to overcome the feelings they had previously left behind" (p.43). This may attribute to feelings of low self esteem experienced by

most ABE students upon enrollment. According to Dubois, "low self esteem is perhaps one of the most important obstacles for an ABE student to overcome if she or he is to be successful in completing his/her goals" (p.70). She believes a positive self image to be the single best motivator for students who were persisting in an ABE program. Dubois (1989), found that "family also played a large part in students' persistence" (p.48). Myers (1988), also found support to be influential in persistence. She stated, "if supportive factors outweigh the inhibitive factors, then learners will probably persist in ABE" (p.111).

Cross (1981), believed "that high self-esteem is a positive factor toward participation in adult education" (p.30). Reiff (1982) quoted an adult education student as saying, "feeling under educated can lead to a poor self-image" (p.3). Hathaway and Rhodes (1979), felt that the common denominator among deprived or disadvantaged students appears to be a shattered self-image, little or no sense of purpose, and a poor understanding of what causes failure or success. They also felt that a program offering individualized instruction, good teacher models, and self-image enhancement had the best chance to succeed.

Studies relating to the locus of control whether a person attributes success or failure to his own behaviour or external forces (Rotter, 1982, as cited in Myers, 1988), to continuation, and completion of goals have been less conclusive. It has been found that more students completed ABE if they were internally motivated and that the majority of those that dropped out had been referred by social agencies. Newsom and Foxworth (1979), determined that the higher the grade completed, the greater the locus of control. A link appears to emerge then between a grade completed, level of self-esteem, locus of control, and motivation. However, a study by Richards (1983), found no connection between an internal locus of control, greater self-esteem, and

whether one obtains their goal. Myers (1988) however, did believe that ABE students with an internal locus of control had a greater chance of completing their goals. She also cited Taylor (1984), who found that "adult learners who completed their literacy program were significantly more internal than those who did not complete the program" (p.37). This may be an area rich for further research and exploration.

Determination to persevere is another factor which has been seen by researchers as impacting goal completion. Dubois (1989) found that

"students who persisted did a certain amount of "self talk" in which they use words, proverbs, parables, etc. to convince themselves to remain in a program when they encountered difficult times. This "self talk" was seen to elicit feelings of determination and stubbornness, which were played out as the student attempted to learn the material presented to him/her " (p.81).

Psychological barriers are often the greatest hindrance in preventing a student from either continuing in an ABE program or enrolling in the first place. As Anderson and Nemi (1970), as cited in Rolfe and Wilson (1979), believed "the disadvantaged are hampered by certain psychological disabilities, including a lack of self confidence, low self-esteem, and a high degree of dependency" (p.6). Others agree that many adult education students have low self-esteem (Kreitlow, 1981). It was also felt by Garrison (1985) that self confidence could influence a students' continuation in an ABE program.

Johnstone and Rivera (1965) noted that barriers to participation and early withdrawal could be conceived as being situational, and perhaps external to the individuals' control and disposition, which are primarily based on personal attitude. Johnstone and Rivera (1965) listed the following reasons for early withdrawal from an ABE program: family situation, divorce, marriage, pregnancy, employment opportunities, medical reasons, economic status, finances, alcohol/drug

use, relocation, transportation, and a lack of time. Jha (1991) cites work by Mezirow et al. (1975), that lists class schedules and moving as contributors to attrition. She cites Darkenwald (1986), Rachale, Jackson, and Leonard (1987), and Wheaton (1976), who mention health, employment, time constraints, and family problems as reasons for leaving ABE programs. Other studies mentioned by Jha related time of class with completion (Crame, 1982); class scheduling, day care problems, transportation and location, health and family problems, and lack of interest (Sticht, 1988-89); and reported non-school related factors as the major contributors to attrition (Jackson-Mayer et al., 1987). Jha (1991) said that "situational reasons may often be given for drop out because they are more socially acceptable" (p.20). Clark (1986), cited in Jha (1991), said that educators tend to minimize the significance of situational factors, believing them to be beyond the control of the program. This may lead educators to believe that attrition results from failure within the student instead of from failure of the instructors of ABE. If situational factors do play such a large role in early attrition from ABE programs, then ways to help counteract these barriers need to be addressed from a program level.

Boshier (1973) as cited in Jha (1991), suggested that class size may have an influence on the amount of personal attention that each student receives from program instructors. A smaller class may provide an opportunity for students to bond and form relationships that would otherwise be more demanding in a larger setting. The opportunity to participate in and receive one to one attention is missed in a large setting. There are also time constraints and greater demands placed on instructors from both students and outside agencies. Dubois (1989) for example, found that supportive teachers aided retention in ABE programs. "They were surprised at the way they were being treated by the teachers, assignments were optional, and they were not criticized if they

skipped class. In short, they were being treated as adults.” (P.68). Butler and McNeely (1987), also found that the presence and assistance of caring and well-qualified staff members do make a difference in student outcomes. This may suggest that administration can and does influence students, through their motivation and the fostering of a positive and supportive educational environment.

Dubois (1989), also looked at what factors motivated students to persist and found success in the ABE program to be a major influence toward goal completion. When students returned to education and were successful, it was incorporated as a personal affirmation of their talents. Instructors, therefore, can be both instrumental toward program change as well as helping students to realize that they are progressing.

CHAPTER V

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

Introduction

In this research, no experimental variables were manipulated. The variables were studied in their natural setting. Through the use of questionnaires an attempt was made to link possible relationships and effects that may exist between the variables. From the students' responses, it is hoped that a profile of those students now attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre could be developed.

This research is concerned with the relationship between various psychological, situational, and demographic variables and how they affect the students' motivation to attend ABE. It attempts to identify variables and tries to explain how they affect motivation. The distribution of variables was not manipulated but studied as they occurred in the natural setting. The research examines the characteristics of the variables, as well as, the relationships and possible effects these variables have on motivating students.

The survey looked at measuring wants, needs, attitudes, and opinions. These units were then categorized into four groups: demographic, psychological, situational, and program variables.

Methodology

Addressing the stated objectives required the collection of two frames of data. The first consisted of collecting data on a number of background variables which would characterize the different learners at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre. The second consisted of collecting data on motivations for participation in ABE. Both sets of data were gathered through a questionnaire.

The participants answered background questions and then proceeded to answer seventy questions regarding their own personal feelings, opinions, and insights. On the *Motivational Profile Questionnaire*, a student's response could range from 1 = not true, 2 = somewhat true, and 3 = very true. Those motivations were formatted into three point, Likert-type items and were preceded by the general question, "How true are the following statements for you?" The literature provided guidance to the types of questions included in this study.

Background Information Sheet

The *Background Information Sheet* was designed to provide information on things such as: gender, age, marital status, number of children, time spent at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre, length of time receiving social assistance, longest period of full time employment, and other institutions attended, as of July 1st, 1997. They were questioned concerning their memories of school, when they left, and whether their school experiences were pleasant or unpleasant. For some of the questions, participants were permitted to have more than one response, these questions were indicated with an asterisk (*). The purpose of the *Participant Profile* (demographic information), is to check for common characteristics among the students involved in the study.

Motivational Profile Questionnaire Sheet

The questionnaire, consisting of seventy questions, was designed to probe some of the variables that have been identified in earlier research concerning ABE students. Some of those identified variables are: the need for self improvement, a concern for literacy development, an economic need, as well as a need for educational advancement.

The Confidentiality Agreement (see Appendix A) was given to participants, and briefly explains the purpose of the research. The final revision of questions consisted of two parts: labelled *Background Information* and *Motivational Profile Questionnaire* (refer to Appendix B & C). From the *Background Information Sheet*, it was this graduate's desire to determine if students attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre had similar socio-demographic characteristics. From the *Motivational Profile Questionnaire Sheet*, it was hoped that common characteristics will emerge regarding factors or variables which may have impacted their motivation to attend ABE. It is also the intern's desire to examine the responses in regards to their relationship between males and females, married and single adults, as well as those with and without children.

SAMPLE

The population for this study is adult learners who a) are currently enrolled in the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre program, b) have been enrolled and participating as full time students for more than twelve weeks and, c) have completed less than eleven grades of formal schooling. The majority of the sample was female (81.8%), white (100%), parents of at least one child (86.4%), and receiving social assistance (100%). The mean age of the twenty-two participants was twenty eight years; the mean level of education was ten years. These students are enrolled in a program that is sponsored by the Human Resources Department Centre (HRDC), formerly known as the Department of Social Services(DOSS). The R.E.A.D.Y. Centre program has a continuous influx of new students enrolling at the centre, which currently has a population of sixty students. The R.E.A.D.Y. Centre is located on Water Street in downtown St. John's, NF, and operates from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM, Monday through to Friday.

The twenty-two students were assigned numbers to protect their anonymity. The twenty-two people participating in the study are considered to be representative of the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre student body. Eighteen were female and four were male. This imbalance in the numbers is indicative of the centre's population. The responses, though unique to each individual, provide a representative profile of the attitudes and motivations of people in this ABE program, and may or may not be representative of other groups.

DATA ANALYSIS

Once the twenty-two questionnaires were concluded, the data were organized using S.P.S.S. for MS Windows Release 6.1. Responses for both male and female participants were entered and frequencies were tabulated. Tabulations were carried out on the following variables: gender, age, marital status, and number of children. The responses to each of the questions were compared according to those variables. Crosstabs were also generated using marital status, gender, and number of children as a basis for comparison.

This study focused on the socio-demographic variables of age, gender, marital status, and the presence of offspring. Responses to each question were tabulated with regards to frequency, percent, and cumulative percent. Through an analysis of frequencies in response to particular questions, it was possible to draw conclusions regarding contributing factors toward goal completion for this particular group of adult basic education students.

RESULTS

Socio-demographic Results

Participant Profile of Students at Survey Time

18 female (81.8%) 4 male (18.2%)

Age

At the time of this study, July 1st, 1997, the mean age of the sample was twenty-eight years. The youngest participant was twenty-two years old and the oldest fifty-two. The middle 50%, perhaps the most typical of all the participants in the sample, ranged in age from twenty-four to thirty-two years (Appendix D, Table 1.1). As of July 1st, 1997, 60% of the respondents had been at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre for more than nine months, the remaining for less than nine months. Of those surveyed only 2 (9.1%) were doing level II courses only. The remaining 90.9% were either completing level III only or working on both level II and III courses conjointly. Of the respondents, females were informed about the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre through a counsellor (41%), friend (36%), or social worker (18%). Males, on the other hand, were informed by their friends (50%), newspaper (25%), or counsellor (25%).

Family and Family Responsibility

Marital Status

Over half of the sample (54.5%) were single at the time of the questionnaire, nine persons (40.9%) reported being married or living common law. The remaining person (4.5%) stated they were divorced. A greater portion of women (61.1%) than men (50%) were single or divorced

(Appendix D, Table 1.2).

The average age of the married men was twenty-eight years. The age of the two single men was twenty-four and forty-one years. The average age of the single women was 27.6 years, married and divorced was 34.9, and 52 years respectively.

On the average, single women were younger than the single men involved in this study at 27.6 years. In contrast, the average age for women (34.9) was higher than for men (28) who were married or living common law (Appendix D, Table 1.3).

Number of Children

Nineteen (86.3%) of the respondents said they had children. Approximately 36.4% of these reported having one child, 18.2% had three children, and 13.6% said they had two children. Approximately 18% of persons involved had more than three children (Appendix D, Table 1.4).

Seventeen, or 94.4% of the women in the survey reported having children. While two women reported having six and seven children, most of the 19 (86.4%) men and women said they had one (36.4%) or two (13.6%) children. Of those persons who reported having children, about 45.4% were single, 36.4% were married or living common law, and 4.5% were divorced. Of the seventeen women who reported having children, approximately 52.9% were never married.

Place of residence or living arrangements

Most of the respondents (72.7%) reported to be living on their own. Two (9.1%) were living with family, while 18.2% were living with their partner, either common law or married. Not all participants who were married were living together and thus, reported to be living on their own. Of the sample, the living arrangements of the women differed significantly from those of the

men. More women (83.3%) were living on their own than men (25%). Of the women living on their own, a significant number (94.1%) has a child living with them. Two of the men which report having a child are living common law or are married. Of the sample, 25% of the men live with parents or family, compared to only 5.6% of women. None of the participants reported living with relatives or friends (Appendix D, Table 1.5)

School Recollections

Perception of previous academic experiences

In an attempt to attain a better understanding of the environment that may have influenced the clientele's withdrawal from school, it was necessary to gain some insight into their recollection of school. From the questionnaire, twelve (54.5%) participants remember school as boring, uninteresting (45.5%), depressing (36.4%), and threatening (4.5%). Four percent of the eighteen female students recall school as fun. Academic success and the experience of success in school could not be remembered by half of the students. Of this half, females (55.6%) had no recollection of being successful compared to males (25%). Others (22.7%) state they never experienced success, 13.6% can reflect on one or two successful experiences, and an equal number (13.6%) said they experienced academic success often (Appendix D, Table 1.6). There were also an equal number of males and females that recalled having many friends (40.9%) and few friends (40.9%). Four of the eighteen female participants express having no friends in school. It was also during this time that respondents said they were experiencing some form of stress (81.8%), anxiety (40.9%), depression (36.4%), and drugs (22.7%). Of the sample, four of the eighteen females expressed bouts or acknowledged bouts with alcohol in the past. None of the

men expressed having experienced this problem (Appendix D, Table 1.7).

Reasons for leaving school

Seven (38.3%) of the female participants as opposed to only one male (25%) left school because of personal reasons. For the female students, personal reasons were equated with pregnancy. Overall, 22.7% left because of family issues, 31.8% had academic difficulties, and the remaining 31.8% stated other. In this survey “other” refers to financial difficulties, no friends, loneliness, stress, and depression. When respondents of this questionnaire left school, they wanted to get a job (63.6%), stay home (27.3%), start a family (9.1%), or leave the province (9.1%). It appears that more than half (66.6%) of the women wished to get a job when they left school (Appendix D, Table 1.8).

Employment Profile

Longest Work Experience

Full employment is the general desired outcome by society for persons who have completed or interrupted their education. The twenty-two participants for this study were asked about their longest period of full time employment. Half of the respondents indicated less than twelve months, between twelve and eighteen months (9.1%), more than twenty four months (36.4%), and the remaining 4.5% said their longest period of full time employment was between eighteen and twenty-four months. This question may be difficult to interpret because the time since leaving school was a definite factor in the responses. It is interesting to note that the majority (86.4%) saw not finishing school as the main reason why they could not gain employment (Appendix D, Table 1.9).

Length of time on social assistance

Responses from the questionnaire indicate that more women (88.9%) have been on social assistance longer than their male counterparts (75%). An analysis of the data also provided insights about the length of time students have been receiving social assistance. As mentioned, the first notable difference was that females tended to be collecting social assistance for longer periods of time than their male counterparts. Of this particular sample, the female population (86.4%) have been receiving benefits for more than two years, 88.9% of the male population indicated more than two years.

MOTIVATIONAL PROFILE RESULTS

Appendix E presents the finding of the questionnaire, labelled '*Motivational Profile Results*'. It was possible to categorize many of the questions into clusters relating to specific areas of concern. These areas of concern were viewed as instrumental in motivating those to persevere and complete their goal. Based on reviewed literature and the intent of this study, it was possible to group questions together under common headings. Using item clusters similar to Beder and Valentine (1990), it was possible to recognize that common factors which may act as motivators do exist among the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE population. These questions were grouped according to specific types of student responses by: 1. Self Improvement 2. Family Responsibility 3. Alternatives 4. Educational Advancement 5. Urging of Others, and 6. Literacy Development vs. Economic Need.

The Self Improvement cluster comprises questions which allow the participant to consider

important needs about their self. Many of the questions required students to reflect inwardly about their needs and desires. The questions were written and then interpreted as what students hope to be as opposed to what they hope to do. With regards to response rate, males and females responded similarly on many of the questions.

Within the Self Improvement cluster, 78% of females responded that they would like to gain more control over their life as opposed to 25% of the male respondents. It was also indicated by 83% of the females and 50% of the males that they wanted to be more important. Eighty-nine percent of the female respondents reported a desire to be more independent as compared with 50% of the males. Both sexes agreed that they needed to have more confidence in themselves. Of the female population, 89% or sixteen of the eighteen females said increased confidence was important. Of the four male respondents, all felt that they were lacking in some area of confidence. Of those surveyed, 100% of the females and 75% of the males stated that the desire to improve oneself was important for them. To feel better about oneself was indicated by 75% of the males as important compared with 83% of the females (Appendix E, Table 2.1).

Such responses may indicate a desire on behalf of both males and females toward improving their overall self image. In this study, such internal psychological factors may be playing a large role in motivating this population. As was mentioned earlier, the questions here may represent a motivational orientation as “what I hope to be” as opposed to “what I hope to do”.

While examining responses made by this particular population regarding family, a few differences arose. All seventeen females saw adult basic education as an opportunity to set a better example for their children. Of those with children, only 67% of the males felt this to be a

need. One hundred percent of females, as compared to 33% of males, indicated a desire to be able to help their children with homework. It is interesting to note that none of the males indicated a need to be a better parent or be better at taking care of their family. Female respondents on the other hand, indicated a need for parenting skills (76%) and to be better able to take care of their family (71%).

Under Family Responsibility, 88% of the females, as opposed to 67% of the males, indicated that they decided to return to school for their family. Although some of the responses varied, it is apparent that family is important to both the male and female respondents (Appendix E, Table 2.2). Such motivation to attend adult basic education could be viewed as situational and relate to various instrumental aspects of family life. It appears that female participants were more adamant about their responsibility toward family. Family responsibility appears to be a strong influence for females in urging them to attend, continue, and complete ABE.

Other questions were categorized as “ Alternatives” because of their ambiguity. These questions could relate to the clients’ intrinsic and extrinsic needs. As a motivating variable, it was necessary to include them and weigh their significance in conjunction with other factors. When asked whether the monetary incentive of \$87.50 every two weeks was important in their motivation to attend the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre, only 11% of the females said yes, as compared with 50% of the males. It was also seen that more males indicated they were enrolled because they had nothing better to do (25%) and because they were bored with their life (75%). Females however, indicated a greater desire to meet people (78%) and to try something new (89%) as particular reasons for attending and continuing at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre (Appendix E, Table 2.3). Such questions are based on the general motivational orientation literature (Boshier, 1971, 1976;

Boshier and Collins, 1985; Houle, 1961; Morstain and Smart, 1974), which suggests that “social activity and escape/stimulation” are common motivators for participation in adult basic education.

When considering possible motivators external to the participants, it was possible to question the influence of others on their decision. Fifty-six percent of females indicated that their friends had urged them to apply, compared with only 25% of males being influenced. Only 50% of females were also urged by family to apply to ABE, whereas only 25% of the males were encouraged by family. One may even suggest that female participants of ABE may have more support regarding their decision to attend and perhaps continue in their educational endeavours (Appendix E, Table 2.4).

According to the results, educational advancement may hold a higher place in motivating females than males. Although all respondents indicate a desire to obtain a high school diploma, the desire for males to continue their education is lower than it is for females. All of the females, as compared to only 75% of males, showed a desire to continue their schooling. The type of schooling was also different for males and females. Females suggest an interest in post secondary schooling such as Memorial University, whereas males did not see this as an option. None of the male participants show themselves to have high expectations for educational success, whereas 61% of females appear to indicate more confidence in their academic abilities. Also, only 50% of the males surveyed said they valued education, compared with the 78% of the female respondents. Having low expectations for success, as well as placing education low on the priority list, may in the end be detrimental to the successful goal completion of males at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre (Appendix E, Table 2.5).

Finally, responses that considered the participants need for literacy improvement and a

desire to improve their financial situation, were also taken into consideration. Items comprising these two factors looked at the influence of both written and oral skills, and the desire to “get off social assistance”. It is interesting to note that for all participants, the idea of getting off social assistance, obtaining a job and earning more money is seen as very important for them.

Both males and females indicated that they see a need to improve their literacy skills. Approximately 86% of all participants indicated they wished to be better at writing, 68% at reading, and 73% wished to be better speakers. Eighty eight percent of the female population, as compared with only 75% of the males, wanted to improve their writing skills. Seventy-two percent vs fifty percent said they would like to improve their reading, and both groups responded equally on the desire to speak better (Appendix E, Table 2.6).

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY

It was possible to separate the data into three broad areas of factors which could be explored independently, as well as together. These areas are: 1. Factors that participants mentioned as being the most crucial in motivating them in continuation at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre program, 2. Impacting factors generated from the survey that appear to play a role in the lives of those involved, and 3. A look at the common characteristics of the clientele obtained from the *Background Information Sheet*. This third area may or may not have a bearing on motivation or perseverance, yet deserves to be examined.

The first area encompasses factors that participants themselves have indicated as having the most impact on their motivation to continue. All those who participated in the survey wanted to prove to themselves that they could finish school and graduate. Adult basic education at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre appears to be providing them with this opportunity. This determination to obtain a high school diploma, get off social assistance, and get a job was rated as a number one priority. Fourteen (78%) of the possible eighteen female participants did not feel that they were too old to benefit from an ABE education. All four male respondents agreed with this statement and did not see their age as a liability. Of the twenty-two who responded, eighteen (82%) of them personally felt that a high school diploma would improve their life. Everyone involved agreed that they needed a high school diploma in today's society to get a job.

Those students who value education may have an intrinsic motivation to do well. Hayes (1988), suggested that a low perception of need could be possibly translated into a low motivation

to attend ABE. This graduate would argue that if this is a permissible suggestion, then a high perception of need could possibly be translated into a high motivation to attend. This does not assume that everyone who perceives education as important will automatically attend, yet such perceptions do allow itself as a motivating force.

Respondents listed self improvement as a motivating force toward goal completion. There was an indication by females, as well as males, for the need to develop both their written and oral skills. It is interesting to note that the majority of the respondents wished to develop better literacy skills. More females than males (8 vs 1) were motivated to improve their writing skills. This may be related to the vast majority of females who also had thoughts of continuing to post secondary education when they finished their GED. Many of the male respondents had their sights set on “trades and labour” type jobs after graduation. As was seen, males and females in this particular study were motivated to attend ABE for different reasons. What may have been a possible motivating factor for women may not have had the same influence for men.

For this population, educational advancement was seen as a number one priority. A desire to complete some form of post secondary schooling, as well as the idea of going to college, was an overwhelming factor for over half of the female participants. None of the males indicated a desire to attend college, yet did suggest the possibility of attending a trade or community college. Perhaps it may be suggested that those females who did indicate a desire about attending college were more confident in their abilities. It may be suggestive that this particular group is experiencing higher levels of self confidence and increased self awareness. On the other hand, the majority of those who had been in the work force for the longest period of time were the male respondents. Do they have a greater need to get back out into the labour market? Do they see

themselves as incapable of furthering their education or does society deem it socially unacceptable for men to stay in school and not work? What is motivating the male participants to discontinue their education once they have received their GED?

It has been suggested that men and women often demonstrated different levels of motivation and interest in training and educational upgrading. As indicated earlier, there are many obstacles which face those that return to school: their own dependency on others, low levels of self-esteem, anxiety about ability, and feelings of inadequacy. Such psychological deterrents to motivation and perseverance are important to consider when looking at determination and other variables.

By examining individual responses, it was possible to determine if a level of significance existed. This significance was important, especially when making any comparisons between males and females.

When considering the responses provided by both male and female participants as having an impact on their motivation, some were very intrinsic in nature. Some of these factors mentioned often centered around their responsibilities as a parent, their responsibility to their family, and themselves. Both men and women agreed that they wish to set a better example for their children, as well as a desire to help them with their homework. Still seen as important, yet representing a smaller percentage of the sample, were those who felt a need to be better parents.

Although intrinsic in nature, family could be considered an external motivating force. It also appears that family does hold a strong place in the hearts of many R.E.A.D.Y. Centre students. All eighteen females surveyed indicated that family meant a lot to them. Family was also seen as one of the main motivating factors that influenced a client's return to school. For

women, family as an influence, represented approximately 83%. On the other hand, only half of the males said that family played a role in their return and continuation in ABE. It also appears that females indicated having more support from their family (89%) to return to school than the males (75%).

Support from family is very important for this group of students. It has also been linked to their persistence. Not only does family influence a student's motivation to attend ABE, but it is possible for family variables to affect a student's continuation. Family plays a role in encouraging and motivating. The degree that it plays in the lives of students depends partly on the value those students place on family itself. For women presently attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre, family is an important force in their present day lives. Perhaps their male counterparts encounter negative feedback from family to return to school. Over half (52%) indicated that friends had urged them to return to school. External support by both family and friends appear to be quite important in the lives of those surveyed.

Well over half of the respondents indicated a desire to feel better about themselves (82%), to be more intelligent (95%), and gain more confidence (91%). It is encouraging to see that so many students who did not experience such confidence earlier in their lives are being motivated to attend ABE. The need to improve oneself and increase ones' self-esteem through education and upgrading is seen by this graduate as an important motivator. The question still arises then, where does this motivation to make the first step come from?

Many of the respondents (73%), did not indicate experiencing any form of academic success in school. Of those that did experience success, they can only remember it happening once or twice (13%). Many of the males and females remember school as depressing (36%),

uninteresting (45%), and boring (54%). It is interesting to note that since coming to the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre, 90% of those involved in this survey saw their current experiences as successful (50%) or very successful (40%). Two female students (11%) responded that their experiences so far have been unsuccessful. The results are still encouraging, especially considering the various circumstances for their earlier withdrawal from academic life. This positive experience may have encouraged others to attend. It was seen that many (61%) were encouraged by friends, and came to hear about the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre by others that have attended or are presently attending. Dubois (1989), found that success was a major factor in goal completion, "When they (students) return to education and begin to succeed, they saw this as a personal affirmation of their talents" (p.47). It is also known that through increasing ones' confidence we may be indirectly impacting on self-esteem. As mentioned earlier, many (82%) felt a need to feel better about themselves.

For this group of adult learners, it appears that there are many things that influenced their decision to return to school. The weight which may be placed on such influences may have been affected by age, gender, marital status, support from others, as well as the students' own perceptions of themselves, and their abilities.

It was possible for this graduate to recognize and categorize common factors among this group of ABE students. Variables influencing students' motivation could be identified based on the demographics information, as well as responses obtained on the *Motivation Profile Questionnaire*.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE

On a general level, this study supports the notion that there is substantial diversity among the adult population. This diversity is especially so with respect to the social and psychological factors that effect motivation in adult basic education. With this in mind, if administrators and program planners wish to facilitate attendance and increase motivation, they may be required to learn more about their students, as well as the factors that increase students' participation.

On the broadest level, adult educators need to recognize that adult education is not seen positively by such returning students but something that one has to engage in, in order to meet their needs. According to Beder and Valentine (1990), critical to such formulations of why adults engage in ABE is the concept of motivation. Also, according to Beder and Valentine (1990), it is important to gain some understanding of the participants and that which leads them to participate of such programs.

Some reasons that as adults gave as to why they returned to school may be categorized as externally or internally motivated. Some of the responses reflected the intrinsic nature of wanting to return to school, while others saw the act of returning to school as an instrumental activity in which skills were acquired. It may be a symbol activity in which learners' internalized feelings of inadequacy are somehow erased. Perhaps the students who are presently attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre see it as the first step in changing their lives. For some, it was seen that the acquisition of instrumental skills, such as learning to read and write better was part of the driving force. According to Charnley and Jones (1979), there are five categories of "success" in literacy education: a) affective personal achievements, b) affective social achievements, c) socioeconomic achievements, d) cognitive achievements and, e) inactive achievements. These categories,

according to Beder and Valentine (1990), are both broad enough and robust enough to represent the research findings of many outcome studies (i.e., Darkenwald and Valentine, 1985; Boggs, Buss, and Yarnell, 1979).

It was apparent that returning to adult basic education was seen by many of the respondents as a way to change themselves, to gain some control over their lives, to become more independent, to increase their self confidence, and to prove to themselves that they could do it (obtain their high school equivalent). They also saw it as a chance to improve their lives financially, socially, and academically. Adult basic education is, for many, the first step toward independence, an independence that may have been unwillingly given up when they decided to leave school.

Although it is possible to assume those surveyed will continue until completion of their program, it is also important to increase this outcome. The following are some suggestions that may increase the chances of goal completion for students in an adult basic education program. Recommendations are stated for those attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre, yet may possibly be incorporated for use in other ABE programs to increase motivation. Only by understanding and responding to the expressed motivations of clients presently attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre, can one hope to make ABE congruent with the significance that these students attach to it.

Based on responses given by students in this survey on both the demographics and motivational questionnaire the following recommendations are suggested as a guide to increase: motivation, self-esteem, confidence, locus of control, independence, incentive, and perception of need.

1. Assessment of students should be gradual, ongoing, and conducted when warranted.

Jha (1991) discussed the effects of testing on early attrition. Particular sensitivity needs to be given to the students' initial feelings of doubt in their ability to do the work. Extensive formal testing may reinforce a lack of self-confidence, especially if a student experiences early failure. It is recommended that assessment be carried out at appropriate intervals, along with feedback on progress.

2. After the initial assessment, students should be made aware of what subjects they will need to cover before reaching their goals (McKenzie, 1986). This plan of study should be reviewed periodically with the student to let them know how much they have progressed. (Perin and Greenberg (1994), discussed the importance of a student knowing how close they are to reaching their goals).

3. Combat lack of self confidence through achievements. (Dubois (1989), mentions the importance of success in goal completion, as do the participants in this study). If assignments are not complete, do some work with them to let them know that they can understand the material and are capable of doing it.

4. Try to enhance their self-esteem through conversation. (Myers (1988), Hathaway and Rhodes (1979), talked about improved self-esteem as a factor in students' motivation to persevere). Let them know that they matter as people. Help them believe that they are capable. Discuss different learning styles if that will help improve self-esteem.

5. Identify any barriers to their educational achievement and discuss ways to circumvent them.

6. Allow students some flexibility in the time of their lessons. As educators, we need to recognize that time constraints represent a serious and universal deterrent to participation in adult

education. Because adult education separates individuals from their families, this creates problems for all learners, but most especially for parents of young children. Program planners would be well advised to consider strategies to counter such problems. Possible solutions may include:

- a) Directly providing child care within the adult education agency.
- b) Locating adult education activities at a site and time, compatible with existing child care provision.
- c) Encourage parents to develop cooperative relationships with other parents, whereby they agree to take care of one another's children during nonconflicting classes.
- d) Finally, broadening program offerings within the agency to include classes for children of various ages scheduled simultaneously with the adult education classes.

According to a report submitted to The Department of Social Services in June of 1989, the group most costly to maintain on social assistance (single mothers) is also the group that is the most motivated to get off assistance. With this in mind, recommendations directed toward motivating this sector of the population to attend ABE is of particular importance.

7. As mentioned, many returning students are unmotivated and deterred primarily by a lack of confidence in their own learning ability. Given the fact that these students are somewhat older, programs should inform them that progress is noncompetitive as well as self regulated, yet they will be given "end dates" that would have to be met. Students should be assisted in their transition with the support of "peer groups". Such groups could be influential in motivating and encouraging confidence.

8. Motivate and encourage students to meet their goals as soon as they can. If they talk about dropping out, try to find out why. Is there anything the program can do to help?

9. If at all possible, institute a mentor program whereby one broker is responsible for monitoring a certain number of students' progress. This broker would consult periodically with the student to see how they were doing and if they need any assistance. This may help reduce any redundancy of work with the student and with the staff, and help to establish trust. The student knows that at least one person is supporting their efforts to their goal (Dubois (1989), listed lack of support as one of the major barriers to education).

10. Ask the student how she or he feels about the materials they are using and change them if necessary. (Garrison (1985), talked about course relevancy and participants in this study mentioned lack of particular interest in subjects). Try to make the content more inspiring. Find out what the student is interested in and find appropriate materials if possible. Couple a subject that the student really enjoys (such as writing) with one that she or he finds more frustrating.

11. Use GED pre-tests to show a student that she or he is ready to take the actual GED tests.

12. Consider having new students watch a video, listen to tapes, or read excerpts from goal completers in the ABE program as a means of support. If they realize that others had the same doubts upon entering, but persevered, it may encourage them also. (Jha (1991), and Harmen (1983), suggested an orientation for new students).

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research was based on factor analysis, a procedure which generally considered to be population specific. In addition, all subjects lived in St. John's, a city which is relatively homogeneous in respect to socio economics, race, and demographics. For these reasons, care must be taken in generalizing the results to other contexts.

An understanding of what plays an influential role in motivating the ABE student to return to school and participate in such a program is important in its own right. Results of this study have shown that motivating factors in student participation vary according to such things as gender, age, and current life cycle status.

In developing new conceptualizations, one must keep in mind the processes through which adults adapt to deficits that might otherwise trigger educational needs. As well, the relationship between the value and attitudes adults hold toward education and nonparticipation are also important when considering a student's motivation.

According to Valentine and Darkenwald (1990), "we long for a general theory, one that is robust enough to cut across the many and diverse practice settings encompassed by the term adult education" (p.32). Valentine and Darkenwald (1990), also state

"we need to recognize that, we are many studies, and perhaps many years away from that goal. Unwarranted generalization either through the inappropriate application of present findings to other population or through an over-hasty shift from exploratory to confirmatory methodologies, will only work against our ever achieving that goal" (P.34).

Further assessment of psychological characteristics, such as individual motivations, learning needs, and self-concepts could supplement descriptions of socio-demographic factors. Such characteristics could possibly yield a greater insight into the complex interplay of variables

that affect both participation and continuance in an ABE program.

Results from this study show that the participants felt that their own determination was one of the primary factors in motivating them until they reached their goals. Other factors such as self-esteem and making progress were also influential.

The relationship between things that helped the student reach his/her goal and locus of control could also be investigated. Many gave reference to their family and friends as one of the things that kept them going. It was found that females considered this as having more impact on them than it was for males. For all participants, support from those around them such as family, friends, as well as teachers, were important in their motivation to continue and persevere. Support could also be looked at from the context of how important it is for those with an external feeling of locus of control.

Indeed, the entire issue of locus of control warrants further study. Whether one attributes their success or failures to internal variables such as ability and effort, or external forces such as luck and task difficulty, require additional investigation. Locus of control and its effects on motivation also warrants further study.

Self-esteem should also be explored in further depth. What impacts or promotes development of self-esteem in students? One could try to determine if there was any correlation between locus of control and self-esteem. The relationship between feeling they were making progress and developing more self-esteem could be looked at. Amount of self-esteem and whether or not students felt they learned differently is another fertile area for exploration. Many indicated having low self-esteem when they initially left school. Did they blame themselves for prior lack of academic achievement? How does such a question tie in with feelings of

determination? Can self blame perpetuate feelings of inadequacy and therefore, decrease a student's motivation to attend school or other academic facility?

As stated at the beginning of this paper, many students entering ABE programs discontinue before they reach their goals. Others spend quite a while working to achieve these goals. Watson (1983), differentiates between retention and persistence. It is important that educators strive to encourage persistence and motivate students until goals are reached and not just retain people in the program. Factors contributing to continuation, as well as motivation, need to be explored and promoted. Further research on those who are not motivated to continue in an ABE program would aid in understanding the problem of attrition and how to deal with it.

Lastly, since participants in this study attributed continuation mainly to their own determination, what about those who come in and out of the program a number of times before they complete their goals? Is it possible to foster a sense of determination in students or is this an inherent quality unaffected by outside influence?

Clearly, a construct such as motivation is multidimensional and goes well beyond the simple desire to improve ones' basic skills and obtain a high school diploma. Such a personal endeavour may relate more with ends rather than the mean, that is, the use to which their education will be put to rather than with the education itself. Looking at the range of motivational factors in this study, the R.E.A.D.Y CENTRE participants are as diverse and goal oriented as any group of learners engaged in protracted and demanding educational learning.

This intern student is greatly indebted to all the participants for their willingness to contribute to this research. They responded to the questionnaire from their hearts and their souls. They gave this student a rare glimpse of their feelings for their decision to return to school. As

was indicated by many, school was uninteresting and boring at best, and threatening at its worst.

For many, there were no recollections of academic success. Hopefully, the courage they have

demonstrated in their return to school will be only the first of many successes.

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF BOOKS AND ARTICLES READ DURING THE INTERNSHIP

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APPENDIX B

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

**Darryl Fost
c/o Dr. W. Kennedy
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland
St. John's, NF
A1B 3X8**

Dear R.E.A.D.Y. Centre Participant:

I am a graduate student in the Educational Psychology Programme at Memorial University. I am interested in studying the motivational factors of students who are presently attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre. I will be examining the needs and attitudes that you currently hold and how they have possibly influenced your decision to return to school. I am asking you to take part in this study.

Your participation will consist of answering a brief questionnaire concerning your background and beliefs about your present situation. You are not obligated to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable with answering. The questionnaire takes approximately 15 minutes to complete.

All information gathered in this study is strictly confidential and at no time will individuals be identified. I am only interested in gathering information on the motivational influences of students attending the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre in general terms and not on any one individual. This study has been approved by the Ethics Review Committee of the Faculty of Education. It has also received approval from the coordinator of the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre, Mr. Rick Engram. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time.

If you are willing to participate in this study, please sign below and return the form to me. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at my office. If at any time you wish to speak to my advisor, please contact Dr. W. Kennedy at 737-7617. A resource person you may wish to contact, not associated with the study, is Dr. Linda Phillips.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Yours truly,

**J. DARRYL FOST
Graduate Student
Memorial University of Newfoundland**

I, _____, hereby agree to participate in a study titled "Factors Affecting Motivation of Adult Basic Education Students: A Profile of R.E.A.D.Y. Centre Participants", undertaken by Darryl Fost. I understand that participation is entirely voluntary and that I can withdraw at any time. All information is strictly confidential and no individual will be identified.

DATE

PARTICIPANTS' SIGNATURE

APPENDIX C
BACKGROUND INFORMATION SHEET

CONFIDENTIAL**PARTICIPANT PROFILE**

Check the most appropriate response(s)*

MALE _____

FEMALE _____

AGE _____

MARITAL STATUS _____ CHILDREN _____ NUMBER _____

1. As of July 1st, 1997, I have been at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre

- less than 3 months
- between 3 and 9 months
- between 9 and 15 months
- more than 15 months

2. I am doing courses in

- level II only
- level III only
- level II and III

*3. I came to hear about the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre from

- social worker
- counsellor
- teacher
- friend
- newspaper
- other _____

4. I have been receiving social assistance

- less than 12 months
- between 12 and 18 months
- between 18 and 24 months
- more than 24 months

5. I am presently living

- on my own
- with family (parents)
- with relatives
- with friends
- other _____

***6. I initially left school because of**

- family issues (divorce, etc.)
- personal reasons (pregnancy, etc.)
- financial problems
- academic difficulties
- other _____

***7. When I left school I wanted to**

- get a job
- leave the province
- start a family
- stay home
- other _____

***8. I see the following as reasons why I cannot obtain employment**

- not finishing school
- no jobs
- not having enough experience
- being too young/old
- other _____

9. Since leaving school my longest period of full-time employment has been

- less than 12 months
- between 12 and 18 months
- between 18 and 24 months
- more than 24 months

***10. My reason(s) for not looking for work**

- I do not want a job
- I do not want to move

- no jobs available
- family responsibilities
- other _____

11. I have had thoughts about coming back to school

- less than 6 months
- between 6 and 12 months
- between 12 and 18 months
- more than 18 months

*12. I would discontinue the program at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre if

- I became pregnant
- I get a job
- I get married
- I had family problems
- other _____

*13. I remember school as being

- boring
- threatening
- fun
- uninteresting
- depressing
- other _____

14. I experienced academic success in school

- often
- never
- once or twice
- cannot remember

15. I had _____ friends in school

- many
- few
- none

*16. I have experienced _____ in the past

- stress
- anxiety
- insomnia
- depression
- alcoholism
- drugs
- other _____

*17. I have attended the following before

- the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre
- Brother T. I. Murphy Centre
- Cabot College
- other _____

18. I consider my current experiences at the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre to be

- very successful
- successful
- unsuccessful
- very unsuccessful

19. Since I have come to the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre I have had

- positive days
- negative days
- both positive and negative days
- not enough time to comment

*20. The hardest thing I have difficulty in dealing with is

- course work
- time schedules
- demands of staff
- amount of material to be completed
- other _____

APPENDIX D

MOTIVATIONAL PROFILE QUESTIONNAIRE

CONFIDENTIAL**Motivational Profile Questionnaire**

I am currently exploring the reasons why adults participate in Adult Basic Education (ABE). For this study I am interested in developing a Motivational Profile of R.E.A.D.Y. Centre participants.

Directions: Using the rating scale below, please answer the following questions based on your own personal feelings and opinions for each item. Circle the most appropriate response.

1= not true

2= somewhat true

3= very true

How true are the following statements for you?

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 1. I need to feel better about myself | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 2. I want to be more intelligent | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 3. I need to have more control over my life | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4. I need to improve myself | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 5. I want to be more independent | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 6. I need to have more confidence in myself | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 7. I enjoy learning new things | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 8. I want to learn new things | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 9. I want to be more important | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 10. I need to make better use of my free time | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 11. I need to be able to communicate better
with people | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 12. I want to be able to help other people | 1 | 2 | 3 |

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 13. I want to set a better example for my children | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 14. I need to be a better parent | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 15. I want to be able to help my children
with their homework | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 16. I need to be better at taking care of my family | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 17. I need to be a better husband or wife | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 18. I enrolled because I had nothing better to do | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 19. I enrolled because I wanted to try
something new | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 20. I enrolled because I was bored with my life | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 21. I enrolled because I wanted to meet people | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 22. I want to be better at writing | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 23. I need to be better at reading | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 24. I need to learn to speak better | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 25. I want a job | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 26. I need information about the job market | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 27. I need to earn more money | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 28. I am unemployed and need to find work | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 29. I want to get off social assistance | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 30. I want to prove to myself that I can finish school | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 31. I want to get a high school diploma | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 32. I want to continue my education | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 33. I want to go to college | 1 | 2 | 3 |

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 34. I want to graduate from the R.E.A.D.Y. Program | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 35. I need to explore my abilities, interests, and aptitudes | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 36. I need to know how to apply for a job | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 37. I need help in selecting my career goals | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 38. I need to know how to pursue a definite career plan | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 39. My friends urged to me to apply for this program | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 40. My family urged me to apply for this program | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 41. I value education | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 42. My family comes before my education | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 43. I am dissatisfied with not finishing high school | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 44. I worry about what the future holds for me | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 45. I am in control of my life | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 46. I enjoy meeting new people | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 47. I see myself as an outgoing person | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 48. I have high expectations for educational success | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 49. I have low expectations for educational success | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 50. I feel that I am too old for ABE education to benefit me | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 51. My family responsibilities prevented me from returning to school earlier | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 52. The \$87.50 every two weeks is why I decided to return to school | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 53. I have low self confidence | 1 | 2 | 3 |

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| 54. I have had poor past experience in school | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 55. A high school diploma will not improve my life | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 56. I need my high school diploma | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 57. I was bored of doing nothing | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 58. I have difficulty trusting others | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 59. I avoid activities that are competitive | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 60. I set goals for myself and start working toward those goals | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 61. I often get angry and lose my temper | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 62. I miss the joys and friendships of younger days | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 63. I wish I could express my feelings to others | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 64. I share personal thoughts with others | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 65. I express confusion due to the conflicting roles I am expected to play | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 66. Family means a lot to me | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 67. My family is supportive in my decision to return to school | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 68. I decided to return to school for myself | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 69. I decided to return to school for my family | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 70. I feel I have matured since leaving school | 1 | 2 | 3 |

APPENDIX E

BACKGROUND INFORMATION RESULTS

Table 1.1	Age at time of Questionnaire
Table 1.2	Crosstabulation of gender and marital status
Table 1.3	Age of sample by gender and marital status
Table 1.4	Number of Children
Table 1.5	Living Arrangements
Table 1.6	Memories of school success by gender
Table 1.7	Problems experienced in the past by gender
Table 1.8	Reasons for Leaving School
Table 1.9	Reasons for not having a job by gender

Table 1.1
Age on 1st July 1997, at the time of questionnaire
 (N=22)

Age	Frequency	Percent	Cum. Percent
22	3	13.6	13.6
24	2	9.1	22.7
26	4	18.2	40.9
27	1	4.5	45.5
28	1	4.5	50.0
30	2	9.1	59.1
32	1	4.5	63.6
35	1	4.5	68.2
36	2	9.1	77.3
38	1	4.5	81.8
40	1	4.5	86.4
41	1	4.5	90.9
50	1	4.5	95.5
52	1	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0

Table 1.2
Crosstabulation of gender and marital status
 (N=22)

Marital Status	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)		Total (N=22)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Single	2	50	10	55.6	12	54.5
Divorced	0	0	1	4.5	1	4.5
Married/ Common Law	2	50	7	38.9	9	40.9

Table 1.3
Age of sample by gender and marital status
 (N=22)
Gender

Marital Status	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)		Total (N=22)	
	Freq.	Mean	Freq.	Mean	Freq.	Mean
Single	2	32.5	10	27.6	12	30
Divorced	0	0	1	52	1	52
Married/ Common Law	2	28	7	34.9	9	31.5

Table 1.4
Number of Children
(N=22)

No. of Children	Frequency	Percent	Cum. Percent
No children	3	13.6	13.6
One	8	36.4	50.0
Two	3	13.6	63.6
Three	4	18.2	81.8
Four	2	9.1	90.9
Five	0	0	0
Six	1	4.5	95.5
Seven	1	4.5	100.0
Total	22	100.0	100.0

Table 1.5
Living Arrangements by gender
 (N=22)

Living Arrange.	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)		Total	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
On my own	1	25	15	83.3	16	72.7
Parents	1	25	1	5.6	2	9.0
Other/ Common Law	2	50	2	11.1	4	18.1

Table 1.6
Memories of school success by gender
 (N=22)

Exp. of Success	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)		Total	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Cannot Remem.	1	25	10	55.5	11	50
Never	1	25	4	22.2	5	22.7
Once or Twice	0	0	3	1.6	3	13.6
Often	2	50	1	5.5	3	13.6

Table 1.7
*Problems experienced in the past by gender**
 (N=22)

Problem	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)		Total	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Stress	3	75	15	83.3	18	81.8
Anxiety	3	75	6	33.3	9	40.9
Depress.	2	50	6	33.3	8	36.4
Insomnia	2	50	2	11.1	4	18.2
Alcohol.	0	0	4	22.2	4	18.2
Drugs	2	50	3	16.6	5	22.7

*Participants were permitted to choose more than one response.

Table 1.8
*Reasons for Leaving School**
 (N=22)

Reason	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Family Issues (Divorce)	0	0	5	28
Personal Reason (Pregnancy)	1	25	7	39
Financial Difficulties	0	0	1	.05
Academic Difficulties	2	50	5	28
No friends	1	25	5	28

*Participants were permitted to choose more than one response

Table 1.9
*Reasons for not having a job by gender**
 (N=22)

Reason	Male		Female		Total	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
Not finishing school	3	75	16	88.8	19	86.4
No jobs available	3	75	7	38.8	10	45.4
Not having exp.	3	75	6	33.3	9	40.9
Other	0	0	1	5.5	1	5.5

*Participants were permitted to choose more than one response

APPENDIX F

MOTIVATIONAL PROFILE RESULTS

Table 2.1	Self Improvement
Table 2.2	Family Responsibility
Table 2.3	Alternatives
Table 2.4	Urging of Others
Table 2.5	Educational Advancement
Table 2.6	Literacy Development vs Economic Need

Table 2.1
Self Improvement
(N=22)

	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
I need to feel better about myself	3	75	15	83
I want to improve myself	3	75	18	100
I want to be more important	2	50	15	83
I want to be more independent	2	50	16	89
I want to have more control over my life	1	25	14	78
I need to have more confidence in myself	4	100	16	89

Table 2.2
Family Responsibility
 (N=20*)

	Male (N=3)		Female (N=17)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
I want to set a better example for my children	2	67	17	100
I want to be able to help my children with homework	1	33	17	100
I need to be a better parent	0	0	13	76
I need to be better at taking care of my family	0	0	12	71
I decided to return to school for my family	2	67	15	88
Family means a lot to me	3	100	17	100

*One male and one female did not answer those questions related to family responsibility

Table 2.3
Alternatives
 (N=22)

	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
I enrolled because I had nothing better to do	1	25	3	17
I wanted to meet people	3	75	14	78
I wanted to try something new	3	75	16	89
I was bored with my life	3	75	11	61
I wanted the extra \$87.50 every two weeks	2	50	2	11

Table 2.4
Urging of Others
 (N=22)

	Males (N=4)		Females (N=18)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
My friends urged me to apply	1	25	10	56
My family urged me to apply	1	25	9	50

Table 2.5
Educational Advancement
 (N=22)

	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
I want to continue my education	3	75	18	100
I want to go to college (M.U.N.)	0	0	13	72
I want to get a high school diploma	4	100	18	100
I want to graduate from the R.E.A.D.Y. Centre	3	75	18	100
I value education	2	50	14	78
I have high expectations for educational success	0	0	11	61

Table 2.6
Literacy Development vs Economic Need
 (N=22)

	Male (N=4)		Female (N=18)	
	Freq.	Percent	Freq.	Percent
I want to be better at writing	3	75	16	89
I need to be better at reading	2	50	13	72
I need to learn to speak better	3	75	13	72
I want a job	4	100	18	100
I need to earn more money	4	100	18	100
I want to get off social assistance	4	100	18	100