

A DIFFERENCE OF OPINION: CONTRASTING THE  
OPINIONS OF PART-TIME AND FULL-TIME  
ADULT VOCATIONAL EDUCATIONAL STUDENTS

MASTER'S PROJECT

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by

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

TABLE OF CONTENTS . . . . .	i
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	ii
LIST OF FIGURES . . . . .	iii
Chapter:	
I.    INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM . . . . .	1
Purpose for the Study . . . . .	1
Problem Statement . . . . .	5
Hypothesis . . . . .	5
Assumptions . . . . .	5
Limitations . . . . .	6
Definitions of Terms . . . . .	7
II.   REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE . . . . .	8
Summary of the Review of Related Literature . . . . .	16
III.  PROCEDURE . . . . .	18
Subjects . . . . .	18
Setting . . . . .	18
Data Collection . . . . .	19
Design . . . . .	20
Treatment . . . . .	20
IV.   RESULTS . . . . .	21
V.   SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, & RECOMMENDATIONS . . . . .	35
Overall Summary . . . . .	35
Hypothesis Summary . . . . .	35
Conclusions and Recommendations . . . . .	35
BIBLIOGRAPHY . . . . .	37
APPENDIX A (Survey) . . . . .	40

## LIST OF TABLES

### TABLES

1.	Mean scores and number of subjects of full-time and part-time students when comparing attitudes of selected dependent variables.	23
2.	Survey Question Responses and Percentages "Learn a New Skill".	24
3.	Survey Question Responses and Percentages "Help me Become Independent and Self-Reliant".	25
4.	Survey Question Responses and Percentages "Society is changing and I need to continue to learn".	26
5.	Survey Question Responses and Percentages "Completion of Course/Program will help me become a better worker".	27
6.	Survey Question Responses and Percentages "Completion of Course/Program will help me to become better equipped to deal with problems".	28
7.	Survey Question Responses and Percentages "Completion of Course/Program will help me attain goals in life".	29
8.	Survey Question Responses and Percentages "Completion of Course/Program will help me make more money".	30
9.	Combination Data Yielding Statistically Different Results	31

## LIST OF FIGURES

### FIGURES

1. Box Plot . . . . . 33  
illustrating distribution of  
answers to "Better Worker" survey question.
2. Box Plot . . . . . 34  
illustrating distribution of  
answers to "Help Me Become  
independent and self-reliant" survey question.

## CHAPTER I

### Introduction

#### Purpose for the Study

The purpose of this study was to survey a sample of adult students enrolled in vocational education programs and courses and assess their motivations for enrollment. Basically there are two types of enrollment options. One is defined as short-term courses and the other is defined as long-term programs. Short-term courses are usually offered in weekly sessions which offer at least 25-30 hours of instruction. Students are permitted to attend these classes during daytime hours if classes are offered. However, the majority of short-term classes occur after 6:00 p.m. Long-term programs usually last approximately one school year and include approximately 900 hours of instruction. Long-term (meaning full-time) programs are either daytime or evening depending upon offering of program at vocational school. The survey will provide some demographic information and answer the following:

- \* To determine the reason adults enroll in both short-term courses and long-term programs
- \* To identify student motivation factors in both short-term courses and long-term programs
- \* To identify why adult students successfully matriculate and drop out of both short-term

courses and long-term programs in an adult vocational setting

- \* To help determine factors which adults feel will contribute to their success in both short-term courses and long-term programs
- \* To determine factors of importance relevant to adult enrollment in both short-term courses and long-term programs in a vocational setting

Several social and demographic trends of the past 25 years have contributed to an increased need and desire for adult education. The United States is becoming a nation of adults. By the year 2000, says the National Center for Education Statistics (Golladay, 1977, p.12), "The United States population will be dominated by persons in their middle years." For most of the years of this century, the United States population has been numerically dominated by young people. With the exception of the World War II years, children under the age of 15 had always been the largest single age group in the nation. By 1980, numerical dominance shifted to those between the ages of 15 and 20. By the year 2000, the largest age group will be 30 to 44 year olds, with a rising curve for 45 to 64 year olds. Rapid social change has sparked increased enrollments in many forms of adult education especially as coursework related to these changes. The sharpest rises have occurred in the 25-34 age group and the 65 and older age group.

Increases in these groups are expected to continue until at least the year 2010 (U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990). In addition to population changes, the nation has seen changes in the roles of women and minorities, in the work environment, in the economy, in family life, and in leisure life. It is difficult to think of any social change, presently occurring or predictable, that would not require increased attention to lifelong learning. Education has a generally supporting, and sometimes critical, role to play across a broad range of human endeavors--from improved job skills to enrichment of life for the individual, and from reducing unemployment to coping with worker alienation for the society. Thus, whether the individual wants to improve the quality of leisure or of work, education is usually perceived as helpful; and whether the society faces problems of assuring equal opportunity or environmental protection, education is frequently mentioned as a first step. The social changes that are now occurring are conducive for the growth of a learning society. These changes have brought about the need for new learning by people of all ages. In 1980, 23 percent of Americans over the age of 25 were actively engaged in some type of learning (Aslanian and Brickell, 1980).

American adults have sought and found learning experiences in a variety of settings. In addition to colleges and universities, many vocational and technical



schools attempted to meet the needs of adults. An increasing number of traditional high schools are also opening their doors to adults. At Columbia High School in Greenbush, New York, community adults have been allowed to enroll in high school courses if class space is available. One woman enrolled in an English course because she was educated in Ireland and wanted to improve her English skills. Another woman enrolled in German to improve her appreciation for opera, and another enrolled in French to improve her speaking ability while traveling. One adult male enrolled in chemistry and physics courses to qualify for nursing school. All of these adult students stated that education is more important to them now because they chose to be there and because they could see the benefits (Hammond, 1984).

Many research studies (Wlodkowski, 1986; Heineman, 1991) have been conducted to assess the needs, motivations, and nature of adult learners. According to Cross (1978),

it is difficult to use the results of studies in adult education for predication because there are so many forces which determine adults' decisions to learn (p. 37).

This study sought to investigate and identify the needs for additional studies of motivational factors affecting adult participation in learning activities. The study focuses specifically on adult students enrolled in vocational/ technical programs and courses. Because of the vocational nature of the program it is believed that the

primary motivation of adults in long-term programs is job or career related. It is also believed that the primary motivation of adults in short-term courses is personally or socially related.

#### Problem Statement

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the factors related to adult enrollment and success while matriculating through adult education courses and programs. This research study seeks to address the need for additional study of the motivational factors affecting adult participation in learning activities.

#### Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that a relationship between specific selected factors and adult success in both long-term programs and short-term courses will be prevalent. In this study, adult participants were grouped together regardless of the type of adult learning experience. The relationship between these factors and adults enrolled in these programs may be personal enrichment and/or social contact. Sometimes adults will enroll in short duration education programs as a stepping stone to longer duration adult educational programs.

#### Assumptions

One of the assumptions of the survey may presume that everyone is attending on a voluntary basis. Accountability for a students' program funding source attending full-time

programs under separate disguise may be an assumption. One can never be entirely sure that survey respondents are entirely honest. This is especially true on the question regarding motivation for attending both short-term courses and long-term programs. Indeed, students who are being supported by JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) and Pell Grant recipients (Federally funded assistance) may even fool themselves regarding their *real motivation*. Nevertheless, this study assumes that respondents reported true motivational reasons for attendance.

#### Limitations

The population surveyed includes a rural community base so therefore the results of the study may not be directly generalized to urban centers. The results might well be generalizable, however, to adult education students in other vocational/technical schools located in predominately white, rural counties which are experiencing considerable industrial and suburban growth. Readers of this research may wish to treat this study as a pilot study. As such, parts of this study may be usable, other parts might be replicated to determine some of the reasons adults are not enrolling in life-long learning activities.

Another limitation of the survey may be the timeframe in which the survey was administered. This may not directly affect the long-term programs. However, there is an

extremely high rate of turnover regarding short-term courses and results may produce slightly different findings.

#### Definition of Terms

Short-Term Courses - Courses are usually offered in sessions that include 10-15 or 25-30 instructional hours. A course may be offered during daytime hours or evening hours.

**Students are usually considered part-time.** Examples of adult education courses may be: Keyboarding, WordPerfect, Windows, Lotus 1-2-3, Microsoft Word/Works, Excel, Powerpoint, Body Sculpting, Machining, Flower Arranging.

Long-Term Programs - Programs are usually offered in 900 hour instructional sessions. The programs may be offered during daytime or evening hours but usually span the equivalent of one school year. Examples of adult education long-term programs may include Office Technology Program, Medical Office Specialist Program, Health Care Technician Program, Building Maintenance Technician Program and Heating/Ventilating/Air Conditioning Program. **Students are considered full-time.**

## CHAPTER II

### Review of the Related Literature

Many of the research studies (Blunt 1983; McKenzie, 1983) that have been completed apply to those adults enrolled in college courses and has failed to take into account the large "adult population" (full-time and part-time) taking courses at vocational technical centers.

One of the purposes for studying motivation in adult education is to determine which courses will have the most appeal to adult learners. McKenzie (1983) used a questionnaire in an attempt to determine the life goals of adults and which courses would help adults to meet those goals. His questionnaire was developed from 92 life goals identified by 54 adults. A sample of 28 life goals was selected for use in the questionnaire. The goals included such statements as "To make new friends," or "To gain better work skills" (pgs. 20-23). A sample of 23 graduate students was used for the study. McKenzie concluded from the study that cognitive interest may not be the primary reason for participation in adult education. Most adults, however, are concerned about their intellectual development. He concluded that course topics associated with financial gain and the management of fiscal resources had the widest appeal to adults. McKenzie also said that course topics associated with self-discovery and self-understanding would continue to

be attractive to many adults regardless of financial or work consideration. Finally, McKenzie concluded that health education and courses related to physical well-being would continue to attract large numbers of adult participants. When observing the results of this study, one must keep in mind that a non-randomized sample was used. Life goals of graduate students were certainly not representative of the life goals of all adults.

A study more closely related to vocational education was conducted by Charles and Margery Oaklief. In this study, 1,179 participants were identified from Kansas adult education center, business management center, community colleges, and vocational/technical schools. All of the participants were enrolled in non-credit adult courses. Of the participants, 596 (50 percent) returned the survey. The researchers found that the primary motivational factors for enrollment in adult education courses were to learn more, to expand the mind, and to develop special skills. Most of the respondents enrolled because of perceived non-economic benefits (Oaklief, Oaklief, 1982).

In a study done by Cyril O. Houle (1961) three classes of adult learners emerged when their reasons for enrolling were analyzed: (1) goal-oriented learners, (2) activity-oriented learners, and (3) learning-oriented learners. Goal-oriented learners seek to accomplish a specific objective, such as getting a job, a raise, or a promotion.

Activity-oriented learners seek to develop social contacts and relationships. Learning-oriented learners seek to learn for the sheer pleasure of learning. Houle clarified that an adult's reasons for learning may encompass more than one of these categories, but there is usually a central emphasis. He states that the requirements for learning include "the recognition of a need or interest, the will to do something about it, and the opportunity to do so" (p. 13). Houle did not claim that his typology was a complete or final description of adult motivation, but it has been highly productive in stimulating research. R. Boshier (1976), after a careful review of methodology and findings of fourteen research studies attempted in various ways to test the Houle typology, concluded that:

Houle's typology is elegant and makes subjective sense, but until motivational orientation researchers develop a suitable psychometric procedure to test its validity, it cannot be accepted or rejected as an accurate description of adult learners (pgs. 42-43).

Nevertheless, the Houle typology offered a useful framework for thinking about multiple motives for adult learning.

Like Houle, A. Tough (1968) used interviews as methodology to understand what motivates people to undertake and continue self-directed learning projects. In his study, interviewers asked adults to think of something that they had spent at least seven hours trying to learn and then to stated their reasons for learning it. The learning project

could involve learning information, skills, or knowledge, but learning motivated primarily by the desire to obtain academic credit was excluded because Tough was interested in self-directed learning projects. Tough also examined reasons for participation in enrollment but this section agreed with his study of motivation factors affecting self-directed learning projects in that there was no single reason for adult enrollment and adult learning.

Another study which classified adult learners by types according to motivation was done by Morstain and Smart (1977). This study identified five types of adult learners: (1) non-directed learners, (2) social learners, (3) stimulation-seeking learners, (4) career-oriented learners, and (5) life-change learners. Non-directed learners are those with no specific goals in learning. Social learners seek to learn because of social interest and to develop personal associations. Stimulation-seeking learners seek occupational gain. Life-change learners seek to improve multiple facets of their lives, such as career, intellectual development, and social contacts. The Morstain and Smart analysis extends and, to some extent, validates Houle's more subjective observations, but there is an important difference between the two approaches. Houle was classifying groups of people, whereas Morstain and Smart were identifying clusters of reasons. The implication from Houle's typology was that people were consistently motivated



by characteristic orientations to learning throughout their lives, whereas the Morstain approach made more room for multiple reasons to exist within the same individual and for motivations to change from time to time.

A study conducted by Burgess (1971) regarding the motivational factors for enrollment described nine preliminary motivation clusters. The interpretable factors were (1) desire to know (2) desire to reach a personal goal (3) desire to reach a social goal (4) desire to reach a religious goal (5) desire to escape (6) desire to take part in a social activity (7) desire to comply with formal requirements (8) desire for personal fulfillment and (9) desire for cultural knowledge. There were not many surprises in the findings of this study. The reasons people gave for learning corresponded consistently and logically to the life situations of the respondents. People who did not have good jobs were interested in further education to get better jobs, and those who had good jobs were interested in advancements. Women, factory workers and the poorly educated were more likely to be pursuing education in order to prepare for new jobs.

One of the most comprehensive studies of motivation in adult education was done by Aslanian and Brickell (1980, p. 54). This study included 2,000 Americans over the age of 25 that were interviewed regarding the causes and timing of their enrollment in adult education. The main hypothesis of

the study was that life transitions, such as getting married, getting a new job, or retiring were the major causes of adult learning. The researchers also hypothesized that the topic an adult chooses to learn is always related to the transition requiring that learning. These participants were asked to identify any learning that was currently taking place in their lives, adult education courses, college classes, company training, television courses, or study groups. They were also asked to describe their reasons for engaging in these learning activities. Of the participants, 83 percent expressed that they were learning as a result of some past, present, or future change in their lives. The other 17 percent expressed other reasons, such as personal satisfaction, to keep mentally alert, to be with others, or to fill time. Of the 83 percent who cited life transitions as their motivations, the specific transitions were broken down as follows:

Career . . . . .	56%
Family . . . . .	16%
Leisure . . . . .	13%
Art . . . . .	5%
Health . . . . .	5%
Religion . . . . .	4%
Citizenship . . . . .	1%

In analyzing the results of the interviews, Aslanian and Brickell concluded that most adults do not return to

school for the sheer pleasure of learning, but rather to cope with some life change. They also concluded that adults who learn because of life changes often learn several things at once. These adults more often learn career skills. The adult learners surveyed by Aslanian and Brickell were already considerably better educated than nonlearners; those with a high-school education or better were twice as likely to be engaged in adult learning. Finally, no differences in the number of adult learners were found between males and females.

In relation to the differences in regard to motivational factors, it was found that men learned more often because of career changes, while women learned more often because of family, leisure, or health changes. It was also found that adults under the age of 65 learned chiefly because of leisure and family transitions. Finally, the study concluded that adults who had attended four-year colleges learned primarily because of career, while adults who had attended high school or two-year colleges learned for other reasons, usually leisure and family.

Anderson and Darkenwald (1979) concluded from their study that sociodemographic variables such as sex, age, income and schooling played only a modest role in influencing adults to learn. These researchers tended toward the transitions hypothesis in maintaining that situational variables, such as life changes and awareness of

adult educational opportunities, played a major role in motivating adults to learn.

Valentine and Darkenwald (1990) discussed factors of deterring participation in adult education. Data from early studies was reanalyzed. The resulting typology described five type of nonparticipants: people deterred by personal problems, lack of confidence, educational costs, lack of interest in formal education, and lack of interest in available courses.

A factor that has not yet been mentioned in the readings was dealt with in a study by Rossing and Long (1991). They mentioned contributions of "curiosity and relevance" to adult learning motivation. Their findings concluded that perceived value (relevance) had a stronger influence on epistemic motivation than curiosity evoked by surprise.

Contrary to the literature cited previously, Henry and Basile (1994) stated that the decision to participate in formal adult education courses decreased at least temporarily when major changes occurred. Such students were less likely to enroll. Knowledge for its own sake and meeting new people were found to be weak motivational factors for such individuals following their major life change event. Cost, was a major deterrent. Social and institutional factors, as well as the availability of

substitutes to meet individual needs, appeared to influence the decision to participate.

### Summary of Review of Literature

The question of why adults choose to participate in various kinds of learning activities and enrollment has not been answered definitively.

- \* Although Houles' three-way typology of adult learners has been neither proved nor disproved, it appeared to provide a reasonably good handle for thinking about individual motivations. Some people engaged in continuous lifelong learning simply because they had an itch to learn; others participated when they had a need to know or when a specific reward for the learning effort was clear to them.
- \* Most adults gave practical reasons for learning. They had a problem to solve, which might be as broad as the desire for a better job or as narrow as learning to build a towel rack.
- \* Broad-scale surveys of adult learning interests and needs were not surprising. Learning that would improve one's position in life was a major motivation. "Improving life" varied with age, sex, occupation and life stage. Young people were primarily interested in education with upward mobility; adults with good jobs wanted a better

one, and those without a job wanted new career options. Older people and those reaching career levels where additional education promised few extrinsic rewards were often interested in learning that would enhance their quality of life and leisure.

## CHAPTER III

### Procedure

### Subjects

The subjects for this study included all of the adult students currently enrolled in short-term adult education courses (spring quarter) at Greene County Career Center. This included satellite locations at participating various area high schools. Also included were the spring graduates of six full-time programs at Greene County Career Center. The subjects in the full-time programs either had a GED or a high school diploma. The short-term subjects, for the most part, had at least a GED or high school diploma. The subjects were asked to indicate their reasons for enrolling in the courses/programs and further why they had completed the program. Demographic information was obtained from the first page of the survey.

### Setting

Adult education students in this setting were predominately white, rural members of the community. Greene County, the county in which Greene County Career Center resides, is experiencing considerable industrial and suburban growth with the advent of the I-675 corridor. This growth has promoted business and industry growth, as well as new housing projects.

## Data Collection

The motivational factors of subjects who are enrolled in adult education courses/programs was gathered by using a 25-item survey (Blunt, 1983). This survey is a modified version of one developed by 54 professional and graduate students in adult education to measure attitudes toward education. The first part of the survey consisted of demographic questions such as: Age, Sex, Program/Course Enrolled, Financial (self-pay or financially assisted), and family structure.

The second part (Category I) was a checklist of items designed to gather motivational factors with regard to completion. A comment section at the end gave the subjects an opportunity to list specific reasons not mentioned in the survey.

The third part (Category II) of the survey concerned the reasons subjects had completed the course/program. This checklist consisted of items ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree" (convenience factors, personal and social factors, and job-related factors).

The fourth part (Category III) of the survey asked the subjects to check items relating to their definition of the relevance of adult education. These categories ranged from Highly Important, Doesn't Apply, to Least Important. A copy of the survey appears in Appendix A.



### **Design**

The overall design of the study was to administer the survey to students enrolled in both short-term courses and long-term programs. This included both full-time and part-time students (FTPT). The survey was designed to take no more than 30 minutes to complete. Confidentiality was insured. Instructors were asked to fill out a form indicating the number of students present and the number of students absent. Forty-three of forty-three (100 percent) long-term students completed the survey. Sixty of 115 (52.1 percent) short-term students completed the survey. Instructors reported a total of five absent students.

### **Treatment**

Survey was a means to "sample" a small population. Three areas of consideration would be convenience factors, personal/social factors, and job-related factors. Analysis of the data indicated motivational factors for enrolling in adult education courses and programs (the survey items). These items were analyzed by factors relating to financial assistance, personal/social benefits and job-related benefits. These results will be presented for selected independent variables with regard to both full-time and part-time student populations.

The open-ended question revealed some motivational factors that were not taken into account in the checklist items.

## CHAPTER IV

### Results

It is clearly apparent there is a substantial difference between the attitudes of full-time adult vocational students versus part-time adult vocational students concerning enrollment motivational factors.

In analyzing the data set, students were numbered 001-043 in the full-time programs with 100 percent responding. Part-time students were numbered 044-103 and 60 of 115 (52 percent) responded to the survey. Numerical assignments for the survey (See Appendix A) in evaluating data set information were as follows: Questions 1-8 (Yes/No Check Items) 1=Yes, 2=No. Questions 9-20 were numerically assigned as follows: Strongly Disagree (-2), Disagree (-1), Undecided (0), Agree (1), and Strongly Agree (2). Questions 21-25 were assigned as follows: Important (2), Not Applicable (0), Not Important (-2).

Dependent variable abbreviations used for analysis were as follows: Learn New Skills (Newskill); Help me become independent and self-reliant (HelpInd); Society is changing and I need to continue to learn (Socchang); Help Me Become a Better Worker (Betwrker); Help me to become better equipped to deal with problems (Dealprob); Attain goals (Attgoals); More money (Makemon).

Responses to additional questions on the questionnaire

were gathered for demographic and administration purposes. Most of these responses were outside the focus of this research project. Nevertheless for clarification, the following are the abbreviations for nonselection of analysis: Instructor Quality (Instrqua); Technology Quality (Technolo); Class being paid for by company (comppd); Chance for Job Promotion (Jobpromo); Received financial assistance (Finassis); Child care assistance (Childast); Good way to use leisure time (Leisure); Improve social life (Soclife); Escape drudgery of daily life (Escpdai); Offered break in the routine of home or work (Brkrout); Welfare or JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act) made training a mandatory requirement (JTPA); Employer made training a mandatory requirement (Employer); and Good way to meet people (MtPeop).

Table 1 presents the mean scores and the number of subjects involved when comparing full-time and part-time adult vocational students' attitudes with regard to various dependent variables. The categorical variables are expressed in abbreviated form but can be understood by the reader.

**Table 1**  
**Mean Scores and Number of Subjects Surveyed**  
**Full-Time versus Part-Time Students**

<u>Variables</u>	<u>Full-Time</u>	<u>Part-Time</u>
Learn a New Skill	1.581 (m) 43 (n)	1.330 (m) 59 (n)
Welfare or JTPA* made vocational training mandatory	1.256 (m) 43 (n)	2.000 (m) 59 (n)
Employer made vocational training mandatory	1.977 (m) 43 (n)	1.627 (m) 59 (n)
Help Me Become Independent and Self-Reliant	1.419 (m) 43 (n)	0.983 (m) 59 (n)
Society is Changing and I need to continue to learn	1.140 (m) 43 (n)	1.508 (m) 59 (n)
Help Me Become a Better Worker	1.476 (m) 43 (n)	1.328 (m) 59 (n)
Help me better deal with problems	1.349 (m) 43 (n)	0.847 (m) 59 (n)
Help me attain goals	1.395 (m) 43 (n)	1.259 (m) 59 (n)
Help me make more more money	1.744 (m) 43 (n)	1.407 (m) 59 (n)
Help me get a job promotion	0.930 (m) 43 (n)	0.525 (m) 59 (n)

(m) = mean

(n) = number of subjects surveyed

\* = JTPA (Job Training Partnership Act)

Selected independent variables were the focus of the evaluation process. Grouping variables for sorting was divided into full-time versus part-time student status (FTPT). The following findings using selected variables from the 25 question survey were arrived from this pilot study.

Learn a New Skill. This particular question was answered with a checklist response with only yes or no as a choice. If response was checked, a positive numerical assignment of (1) was recorded. If item was not checked, a numerical assignment of (2) was recorded.

**Table 2**

**Question: I want to learn a new skill**

Student Status	<i>I want to learn a new skill</i>	
	Yes	No
Full-Time	41.86% n=18	58.14% n=25
Part-Time	66.10% n=39	33.90% n=20

Pooled variances on the separated t-test were not significant ( $t = 2.484$ ,  $df = 100$ ,  $prob = 0.15$ ). Significant mean level of 1.581 (full-time student) was higher than that of 1.339 (part-time student).

Help Me Become Independent and Self-Reliant. This particular statement category was answered with strongly agree (2), agree (1), undecided (0), disagree (-1), and strongly disagree (-2). Numerical assignments for coding are indicated in parenthesis.

**Table 3**

**Statement: Completion of Program or Course will help me become independent and self-reliant**

Student Status	<i>Will help me become independent and self-reliant</i>		
	Negative	Undecided	Positive
Full-Time	0% n=0	0% n=0	100% n=43
Part-Time	15.25% n=9	5.08% n=3	79.66% n=47

Pooled variances on the separated t-test were significant ( $t = 2.407$ ,  $df = 100$ ,  $prob = 0.018$ ). Significant mean level of 1.419 (full-time students) was higher than that of 0.983 (part-time students).

It was interesting to note that all full-time students had the expectation that the vocational training process was an enabler of stronger independence and self-reliance when compared to the contrast of 20 percent of the part time students who did not share that same expectation.

Society is changing and I need to continue to learn.

This statement category was answered with strongly agree (2), agree (1), undecided (0), disagree (-1), and strongly disagree (-2).

Table 4

**Society is changing and I need to continue to learn**

Student Status	<i>Society is changing and I need to continue to learn</i>		
	Negative	Undecided	Positive
Full-Time	4.65% n=2	4.65% n=2	90.70% n=39
Part-Time	0% n=0	0% n=0	100% n=59

Pooled variances on the separated t-test were significantly different ( $t = -2.842$ ,  $df = 100$ ,  $prob = 0.005$ ). The mean level of 1.508 (part-time students) was higher than that of 1.140 (full-time students).

It was noted in this category that all of the part-time students agreed that society was changing and therefore new learning was inevitable. The full-time student population, however, at least 9.3 percent, were in disagreement or undecided with the regard to the statement. Researcher noted the difference in emphatic answers between full-time and part-time students. Perhaps the 9.3 percent full-time population that answered negatively or undecided were in disagreement because they were mandated either by company or governmental agencies to enroll in vocational education.

Therefore, their disagreement may have alluded to the need to learn. None of the part-time students were undecided or in disagreement with this statement. Seven percent of the full-time adult population surveyed had reservations with this statement. Once again, a subtle but perhaps distinct difference was noted in the evaluation of the answers given by full-time adult students and at least some of the part-time adult students.

Help Me Become a Better Worker. This statement category was answered with strongly agree (2), agree (1), undecided (0), disagree (-1), and strongly disagree (-2).

**Table 5**  
**Completion of Program or Course will help**  
**me become a better worker**

Student Status	<i>Will help me become a better worker</i>		
	Negative	Undecided	Positive
Full-Time	6.98% n=3	0% n=0	93.02% n=40
Part-Time	1.69% n=1	8.47% n=5	89.83% n=53

Pooled variances on the separated t-test were not significantly different ( $t = 1.079$ ,  $df = 98$ ,  $prob = 0.283$ ). The mean of 1.476 (full-time students) was slightly greater than that of 1.328 (part-time students).

It was noted that 10.16 percent of the part-time students surveyed either did not believe or disagreed that



the vocational training would help them become a better worker. This may be explained by taking into account the number of part-time students who enroll in vocational training for leisure and social purposes thereby making this statement irrelevant to their particular situations and aspirations.

It will help me to become better equipped to deal with problems. This statement category was answered with strongly agree (2), agree (1), undecided (0), disagree (-1), and strongly disagree (-2).

**Table 6**

**Completion of Program or Course will help me become better equipped to deal with problems**

Student Status	<i>Will help become better equipped to deal with problems</i>		
	Negative	Undecided	Positive
Full-Time	4.65% n=2	9.30% n=4	86.05% n=37
Part-Time	15.25% n=9	11.86% n=7	72.88% n=43

Pooled variances on the separated t-test were significantly different ( $t = 2.308$ ,  $df = 100$ ,  $prob = 0.023$ ). The mean level of 1.349 (full-time students) was substantially higher than that of 0.847 (part-time students).

This category statement left much freedom in interpretation of the word *problems*. It was generic and unspecific. The question did not indicate to the student population whether or not this meant personal problems, work-related or some other type of problem. In looking at the findings this vague interpretation may be exfoliated by realizing that the subjects were called upon to interpret and answer. Although subjects leaned toward agreement with the statement, the part-time subjects were less convinced (72.88 percent) than full-time subjects (86.05 percent). The ratio of 27 percent part-time subjects being in disagreement or undecided may be indicative of their choosing to ignore the interpretation of the statement.

It will help me attain goals. This statement category was answered with strongly agree (2), agree (1), undecided (0), disagree (-1), and strongly disagree (-2).

**Table 7**

**Completion of Program or Course will help me  
attain my goals in life**

Student Status	<i>Will help me attain my goals in life</i>		
	Negative	Undecided	Positive
Full-Time	0% n=0	9.30% n=4	90.07% n=39
Part-Time	3.38% n=2	11.86% n=7	84.75% n=50

Pooled variances on the separated t-test were not significantly different ( $t = 0.962$ ,  $df = 99$ ,  $prob = 0.338$ ). The mean level of 1.395 (full-time students) was slightly higher than that of 1.259 (part-time students).

It was noted that 15.24 percent of the part-time student population either disagreed or were undecided in the expectation of vocational education helping them achieve their goals. Full-time student responses were 9.30 percent undecided in this regard. While the majority of both populations were in agreement with the statement, one must ponder the reasons why the smaller student population did not hold the expectation that vocational training would facilitate their attainment of goals.

I need to make more money. This statement category was answered with strongly agree (2), agree (1), undecided (0), disagree (-1), and strongly disagree (-2).

Table 8

Completion of Program or Course will  
help me make more money

Student Status	<i>Will help me make more money</i>		
	Negative	Undecided	Positive
Full-Time	4.66% n=1	2.33% n=1	93.02% n=41
Part-Time	5.08% n=3	0% n=0	94.91% n=56

Pooled variances on the separated t-test were significantly different ( $t = 2.240$ ,  $df = 100$ ,  $prob = 0.027$ ).

The mean level of 1.744 (full-time students) was higher than that of 1.407 (part-time students).

When combining statistics for both full-time and part-time student responses, there was a statistically different result for one variable, making money. When looking at Table 9, there appeared to be three variables that were not significant at the .05 level when combining data. This was interesting when comparing the significant levels upon separation of the full-time and part-time adult vocational students.

**Table 9**  
**Combination Data of Full-Time and Part-Time**  
**Student Responses Yielding Different Results**

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DEP VAR:	FTPT	N:	99	MULTIPLE R:	0.525	SQUARED MULTIPLE R:	0.276
ADJUSTED SQUARED MULTIPLE R:			.220	STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATE:			0.439

VARIABLE	COEFFICIENT	STD ERROR	STD COEF	TOLERANCE	T	P(2 TAIL)
CONSTANT	2.136	0.218	0.000		9.792	0.000
HLPIND	-0.105	0.049	-0.196	0.936	-2.129	0.036
SOCCHANG	0.213	0.068	0.289	0.935	3.129	0.002
NEWSKILL	-0.199	0.094	-0.200	0.882	-2.110	0.038
BETWRKER	-0.124	0.067	-0.170	0.939	-1.845	0.068*
DEALPROB	-0.111	0.040	-0.249	0.980	-2.769	0.007
ATTGOALS	-0.023	0.064	-0.034	0.947	-0.366	0.715*
MAKEMON	-0.077	0.060	-0.120	0.920	-1.291	0.200*

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE

SOURCE	SUM-OF-SQUARES	DF	MEAN-SQUARE	F-RATIO	P
REGRESSION	6.672	7	0.953	4.953	0.000
RESIDUAL	17.510	91	0.192		

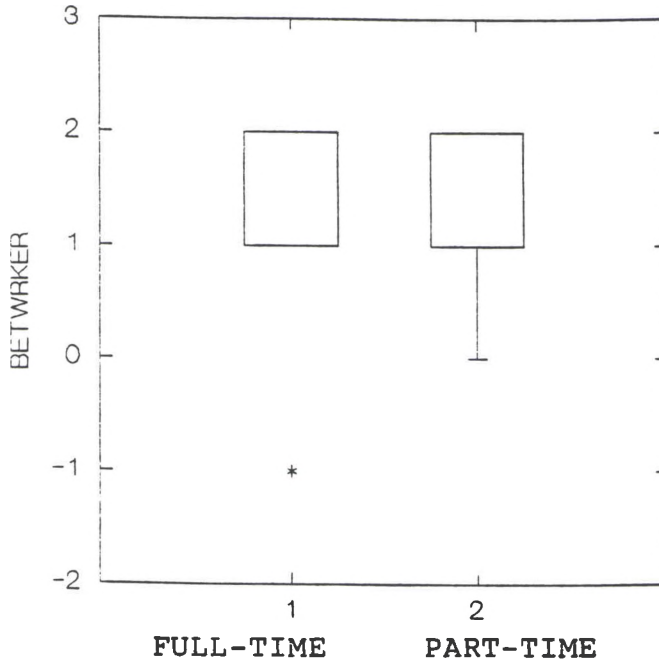
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The magnitude of responses using a box plot concept is identified in Figure 1. Box plots are a more well-defined view of the relative positions of one dependent variable for the two different student groups (full-time and part-time). This concept can be explained by thinking of an aerial view where 50 percent of the majority answers reside inside a box. The other two 25 percent distributions are outside this 50 percent box in a "whiskers" or straight-line configuration. This aerial view, including the whiskers can be similar to the shape of a bell-curve. Outliers (a score which reveals itself at an appreciable distance from the location of other scores) were apparent in both Figures 1 and 2.

According to Landwehr and Watkins (1986), box plots reveal the median, quartiles, and the extremes. The focus on the relative positions of different sets of data are more apparent and thereby comparisons can be made more easily.

In Figure 1, 25 percent of the part-time responses were actually lower than virtually all of the responses of the full-time students. One outlier is identified with a (\*).

**Figure 1**  
**Box Plot, Whiskers and Outlier Regarding**  
**Response Data "Completion of Course**  
**or Program will help me become**  
**a better worker"**

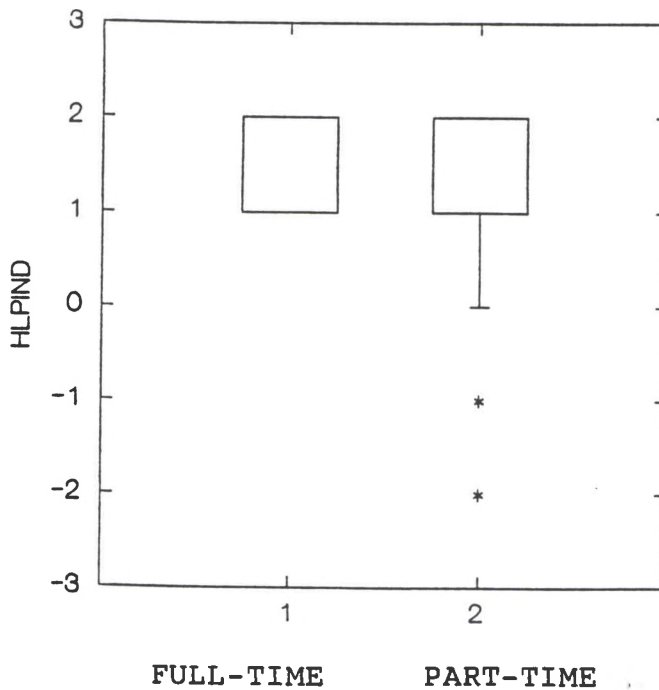


Once again as illustrated in Figure 2, 25 percent of the part-time responses were located outside the 50 percent box plot with two outliers being identified with (\*). This is similar to Figure 1 in that 25 percent of the student responses were actually lower than virtually all of the full-time student responses.

**Figure 2**

**Box Plot, Whiskers and Outliers**

**Regarding Response Data "Completion of Course or  
Program will help be become independent  
and self-reliant"**



## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Overall Summary

The problem statement is restated as such: This survey was administered to both full-time and part-time adult vocational students to ascertain the reasons for enrollment, to identify why adult students successfully matriculate and drop out of adult vocational training and to determine the factors of importance relevant to adults enrolling in adult vocational training.

#### Hypothesis Summary

The relationship between specific selected factors and adult success would be shown. Results have shown distinct and more subtle differences in distribution of responses to survey questions when comparing a full-time adult vocational students' opinions with part-time adult vocational students' opinions toward motivational factors influencing enrollment.

#### Conclusions and Recommendations

The answer to the question of why adults participate in learning activities will probably never be answered by a single questionnaire. Motives may differ for different groups of learners, at different stages of life. Furthermore, some individuals have not one but multiple reasons for learning. Whether there is a general tendency for people to have a characteristic stance toward learning



is a question worth further study. A recommendation gathered from this pilot study indicates that the literature does not make a distinction between the motives and answers of full-time and part-time adult vocational students. This factor should be reevaluated in terms of basing decisions on the good for all adult vocational students. Research on reasons adults do not participate may hold equal value in ascertaining the real reasons adults are motivated to enroll, complete a single course or a full-time program and continue with life-long learning. Consideration of combining full-time and part-time student responses versus independent consideration should be carefully weighed when using data for decision-making processes related to students in a vocational program.

Substantial numbers (See Figures 1 and 2) of adult vocational students (25 percent) may hold the hidden opinions of potentially successful students. The elements of good decision making in regard to adult vocational training may reside in their true opinions. Perhaps the question to ask for future research might encompass the following: How can programs assist part-time adult vocational education students to become more positive and committed to their own futures? Any statistical approach where decisions are made related to mean scores may well help to create and sustain specific interests and faith in vocational programs if these hidden opinions are revealed and redirected.

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## APPENDIX A

### ADULT EDUCATION SURVEY

The following survey is designed to determine why adults enroll in adult education courses and programs. First, please fill out the top portion of the survey completely. Answers to the survey will be used as part of a research project. DO NOT write your name on the survey!

Please read each statement carefully and place a check on the line under the statement that best describes how much you agree or disagree with the statement. There is also a checkmark list that you may check (check as many items as apply). Answer "Undecided" to any items about which you have no feelings or which you feel do not apply to you.

#### THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION

AGE: \_\_\_\_\_18-35                      \_\_\_\_\_36-55                      \_\_\_\_\_Over 55

SEX: \_\_\_\_\_Male                      \_\_\_\_\_Female

PLEASE LIST THE NAME OF PROGRAM OR COURSE YOU HAVE JUST COMPLETED:

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DATE COMPLETED: \_\_\_\_\_

ARE YOU BEING FINANCIALLY ASSISTED (BY YOUR COMPANY OR A FEDERALLY FUNDED PROGRAM)?

\_\_\_\_\_YES                      \_\_\_\_\_NO

FAMILY STATUS:

\_\_\_\_\_MARRIED

\_\_\_\_\_MARRIED WITH DEPENDENT CHILD/CHILDREN

\_\_\_\_\_SINGLE/NO CHILDREN

\_\_\_\_\_SINGLE PARENT OR HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED:

\_\_\_\_\_GRADE SCHOOL

\_\_\_\_\_HIGH SCHOOL

\_\_\_\_\_ASSOCIATE'S DEGREE

\_\_\_\_\_BACHELOR'S DEGREE

S U R V E Y

I DECIDED TO ENROLL IN ADULT COURSES/PROGRAMS:

Please check all that apply!

CATEGORY I

- 1. after reading materials sent out by the career center. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. after hearing about them in radio ads. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. after seeing them in T.V. ads. \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. after reading about them in local newspapers. \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. because distance to class/travel time was convenient. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. because I was motivated to learn a new skill. \_\_\_\_\_
- 7. welfare or JTPA (Jobs Training Partnership Act) made this a mandatory requirement. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. my employer made this a mandatory requirement. \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY II

The next category is a checklist ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (SD), "Disagree" (D), "Strongly Agree" (SA) and "Agree" (A). You may check "Undecided" (U) if category does not apply.

I DECIDED TO COMPLETE THIS PROGRAM OR COURSE BECAUSE:

	SD	D	U	A	SA
9. it will help me become independent and self-reliant.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
10. society is changing and I need to continue to learn.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
11. it will help me to become a better worker.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
12. it will help me to be better equipped to deal with problems.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**SURVEY CONTINUED**

	<b>SD</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>SA</b>
13. it will help me to attain my goals in life.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
14. I need to make more money.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
15. the quality of the instructor(s) teaching this course was excellent.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
16. the technology available was excellent.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
17. it is being paid for by my company.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
18. I will have a chance for job promotion.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
19. I received financial assistance.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
20. I received child care assistance.	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

**CATEGORY III**

**PLEASE CHECKLIST THE FOLLOWING ITEMS AS THEY APPLY TO YOU:**

**ADULT EDUCATION IS:**

	<b>IMPORTANT</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>NOT IMPORTANT</b>
21. a good way to use leisure time.	_____	_____	_____
22. helping me improve my social life.	_____	_____	_____
23. helping me escape the drudgery of daily life.	_____	_____	_____
24. offering a break in the routine of home or work.	_____	_____	_____
25. a good way to meet people.	_____	_____	_____

**SURVEY CONTINUED**

If there are specific reasons why you have enrolled in adult education programs or courses which you feel are not covered in this survey, please describe those reasons below:

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**THANK YOU !!!!!**