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ABSTRACT

This dissertation examines the motivational orientations of students with disabilities in five North Carolina community colleges. The paper considers the following issues: reasons for community college attendance among disabled students; differences in demographics and motivations among students with and without disabilities; and differences in these motivations by type of disability. A random sample of students, both with and without disabilities, was selected. The Educational Participation Scale (EPS) instrument was mailed to students, and a total of 198 responses were collected. The results of the study indicated that among students with disabilities, a higher proportion of them were female, older, and less likely to have children and work full-time, as compared with their non-disabled peers. In addition to demographic discrepancies between the two groups, students with disabilities also scored higher on four of the EPS factors: social contact, educational preparation, social stimulation, and cognitive interest, indicating that these students enrolled in community colleges for social and academic reasons. The opportunity to meet new people and explore intellectual curiosities encourages them to participate. (Contains 52 references and two appendices, including the EPS instrument.) (JCC)

MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

A Dissertation

Presented to

The Faculty of Educational Leadership

and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

by

John H. Humphrey, Jr.

May 1999

APPROVAL

This is to certify that the Graduate Committee of

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met on the

4th day of November, 1998.

The committee read and examined his dissertation, supervised his defense of it in an oral examination, and decided to recommend that his study be submitted to the Graduate Council and the Dean of the Graduate School, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctorate of Education.

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Chair, Graduate Committee

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Signed on behalf of
the Graduate Council

Dean, School of Graduate Studies

ABSTRACT

MOTIVATIONAL ORIENTATIONS OF STUDENTS

WITH DISABILITIES IN WESTERN NORTH CAROLINA

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By

John H. Humphrey, Jr.

This research focused on the motivational orientations of students attending community colleges in western North Carolina. The purpose of the study was to develop a profile of students with disabilities in degree, diploma, or certificate programs, to determine their motivations for enrolling, and compare the results to students without disabilities at the same colleges. Five community colleges were randomly selected from the colleges in the western counties of North Carolina. A stratified random sample of students, both with and without disabilities, was selected. Each student was mailed a copy of the Educational Participation Scale (EPS) modified to collect demographic data. A follow-up reminder was mailed at two-week and four-week intervals. Four hundred sixty-eight questionnaires were distributed. One hundred ninety eight responses were received for an overall return rate of 42.3%.

The results indicated that, among the group of students with disabilities, there was a higher proportion who were female. These students were older, yet less likely to have children in the home and work full-time, as compared to their non-disabled peers. Students with disabilities scored higher on four of the EPS factors; Social Contact, Educational Preparation, Social Stimulation, and Cognitive Interest. These students appear motivated to participate by the opportunity to meet new people and find social stimulation. They also were more likely than their non-disabled counterparts to seek a remedy for past educational deficiencies and satisfy their intellectual curiosities.

These results suggest that the main reasons why students with disabilities enroll in community colleges are social and academic concerns. Community colleges need to be sensitive to the unique needs of students with disabilities and design programs and services that emphasize the continuing development of these students.

DEDICATION

To my wife Brenda, whose many years of teaching young children has shown me what it really means to be an educator. Her inspiration and dedication to her students made this project possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author wishes to thank Dr. Russ West, Chairperson of the doctoral committee, for his support and leadership throughout the life of this project. Without his faith that perseverance would prevail, the end result would not be this document. The other members of the committee, Dr. Hal Knight, Dr. Nancy Dishner, and Dr. Terry Countermine were instrumental with their encouragement and advice. A special word of thanks goes to Dr. John Anderson who retired before the author could finish the project.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

No clearing in the woods awaits my coming,
foot or horseback,
except the clearing that I make for myself.
McKuen, 1971, p.39

The number of students with disabilities attending college has risen since 1978 when 2.6% of college freshmen were disabled (American Council on Education, 1991). The United States Department of Education reports that the number of students with disabilities accounted for 6.3% of all college students in 1993 (U. S. Department of Education, 1996). This represents approximately 901,000 students with disabilities (U. S. Department of Education, 1996) enrolled in higher education.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336) defined the term disabled as meeting one or more of the following conditions: (1) a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of a person's major life activities, (2) a record of such impairment exists for a person, or (3) a person is regarded as having such an impairment. These conditions are in reference to a person and his/her existence in an organization, which in this case, is a college. Community colleges use an "open door" approach that encourages

participation of students who possess varying degrees of academic, physical, and mental preparation (HEATH Resource Center, 1993). This uniqueness of the community college creates a multiplicity of concerns that other postsecondary institutions do not face. The Commission on the Future of the North Carolina Community College
System (1988), stated that "as important as instructional content is, the challenge of bringing students to that instruction and supporting them through it is more vital"(p. 17). Community colleges have long been recognized as providing support for a diverse student population.

Satisfying aspirations for an education is considered to be a major life activity by many students. "Major life activities" are defined by The Americans with Disabilities Act and The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112, Section 504) as "caring for oneself, walking, seeing, hearing, speaking, breathing, learning, and working". The fact that learning is defined as a "major life activity" by the Americans with Disabilities Act raises important questions about access for those in the community college.

The inclusion and integration of disabled persons into mainstream society is consistent with the idea of "open access" which is the cornerstone of the community college (Vaughan, 1991). It is important that community college

personnel gain an understanding of students with disabilities and their reasons for participating in college so they will know how to approach this diverse student population and respond appropriately. Anticipating movements within society and providing educational solutions within the framework of the community college are crucial to the continued success of the community college and its student population.

Historically, a number of studies have been undertaken to determine why students are motivated to participate in college. Houle (1961), in a classic study, interviewed 22 adults to determine their motivation for participating in postsecondary education. Houle identified three types of students: activity-oriented, goal-oriented, and learning-oriented individuals. This typology represents the basic foundation upon which subsequent studies of adult education were based. Using Houle's typology as a basis, Boshier (1971) developed the Educational Participation Scale (known as the EPS) as an analytical measure of the motivation possessed by adult students. Morstain and Smart (1974) subjected this early version of the EPS to factor analysis and found it to support Houle's assumptions about adult motivation. Later studies by Boshier and Collins (1985), Henry and Basile (1994), and Fujita-Stark (1996) found that, by and large, Houle's typology holds up well.

All of the studies mentioned above were conducted with populations of students without disabilities. No major research has been conducted to determine if the motivational factors for participation in postsecondary education are the same for students with disabilities and students without disabilities.

Statement of the Problem

The number of students with disabilities attending postsecondary institutions has increased over the past two decades and major legislative efforts have been made to ensure that opportunities are given to all persons. There are disagreements among governmental agencies, advocate groups, and researchers concerning the actual number of students with disabilities who are in attendance at postsecondary institutions. A paucity of research exists (Oliker, 1990; Page & Chadsey-Rusch, 1995; Ticoll, 1995) detailing the experiences of students with disabilities in their participation in postsecondary education. Therefore, this study will assess the motivations to participate in postsecondary education by students with disabilities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of students with disabilities in curriculum programs, to determine their motivations for enrolling, and compare the results to students without disabilities at the same colleges.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Who are the curriculum students with disabilities and curriculum students without disabilities attending community colleges in Western North Carolina and what are their demographic characteristics?
2. Are there any relationships between demographic variables and disability status?
3. Why are students with disabilities attending the community colleges and what are their educational goals?
4. Is there a difference in the motivational orientations of students with disabilities and students without disabilities in the community college environment?
5. Is there a difference in the motivational orientations of students with disabilities according to the type of disability they possess?

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were developed to address the research questions listed above:

Ho1: There is no relationship between disability status and gender.

Ho2: There is no relationship between disability status and race.

Ho3: There is no relationship between disability status and having children in the home.

Ho4: There is no relationship between disability status and work status.

Ho5: There is no relationship between disability status and hours worked per week.

Ho6: There is no relationship between disability status and marital status

Ho7: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of age.

Ho8: There is no relationship between disability status and educational goal

Ho9: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Communication Improvement factor.

Ho10: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Contact factor.

Ho11: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Educational Preparation factor.

Ho12 There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Professional Advancement factor.

Ho13: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Family Togetherness factor.

Ho14 There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Stimulation factor.

Ho15: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Cognitive Interest factor.

Ho16: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Communication Improvement factor.

Ho17: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Contact factor.

Ho18: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Educational Preparation factor.

Ho19: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Professional Advancement factor.

Ho20: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Family Togetherness factor.

Ho21: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Stimulation factor.

Ho22: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Cognitive Interest factor.

Significance of the Study

The mission of the community college is to "take people from where they are to where they want to be" (North Carolina Department of Community Colleges, 1993, p.55). Through moral and legislated efforts (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990), the opportunity to participate in college is now available for anyone regardless of disability status.

Understanding the factors that determine why students with disabilities participate will allow community college faculty and administrators to better understand the needs of this special group of students. It will provide knowledge

about the support services and methods needed for students with disabilities as they seek to attain their educational aspirations.

Limitations

Participation was limited to a sample of students with disabilities and a sample of students without disabilities. These students attended Asheville- Buncombe Technical Community College, Blue Ridge Community College, Haywood Community College, Mayland Community College, and McDowell Community College during Fall Semester 1997. The response rate for the survey was 43.2%. All data concerning disability and level of success was the subjective opinions of the students involved.

The use of five community colleges located in the mountains of Western North Carolina will limit the generalization of the results of this study to that region. Further study would be required to generalize to the rest of North Carolina.

Definitions

Cognitive Interest: A factor on the EPS concerned with seeking knowledge "for its own sake" and satisfying and expanding an "inquiring" mind (Boshier, 1991).

Communication Improvement: A factor on the EPS that is concerned with enrolling in classes to improve communication (written and verbal) skills as well as conventions associated with communication (Boshier, 1991).

Curriculum Student: A student enrolled in courses that can result in a degree, certificate, or a diploma. These students can be attending full-time or part-time, taking classes during the day, at night, or both.

Disabled: A "physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities". (Americans with Disabilities Act, 1990).

Educational Preparation: A factor on the EPS concerned with past academic deficiencies and corrections. This factor also deals with preparing for higher and more specialized education (Boshier, 1991).

EPS: The original Educational Participation Scale was developed by Roger Boshier in 1971 to investigate student motivation. The EPS was revised to its current form in 1991 to correct questions concerning the physical and environmental make-up of the instrument.

Family Togetherness: A factor on the EPS concerned with bridging generation gaps and improving family relationships (Boshier, 1991).

Professional Advancement: A factor on the EPS that is concerned with improving one's status in an existing job or moving to a better one (Boshier, 1991).

Social Contact: A factor on the EPS that is concerned with meeting people and making friends (Boshier, 1991).

Social Stimulation: A factor on the EPS concerned with escaping unhappiness, loneliness, and boredom (Boshier, 1991).

Student with Disabilities: A curriculum student certified by Student Services at the respective colleges during Fall Semester, 1997, registration as having self-identified themselves as being disabled. The disabilities may be physical or mental and the student may have a single disability or be multi-disabled.

Student without Disabilities: A curriculum student who has not been certified by Student Services at the respective colleges during Fall Semester, 1997 registration as being disabled.

Overview of the Study

Chapter 1 includes an introduction to the problem of understanding the reasons for participation in the community college by students with disabilities, the significance of the problem, the research questions, limitations of this study, definitions of terms used, and an overview of this study.

Chapter 2 reviews significant research on adult students' educational participation and their reasons for doing so. Research on the disabled college student is also reviewed.

Chapter 3 identifies the population and sample selection process, the instrument used in the study, and the data analysis methods.

Chapter 4 represents the results of the statistical data analysis.

Chapter 5 provides a summary of the relevant findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature and related research is presented in two major sections: (1) Participation of Adult Learners in Education and (2) Students with Disabilities.

Participation of Adult Learners in Education

Societal changes over the past three decades have dictated that there needs to be a more literate adult population. The changes are driven by changing population characteristics; a more mobile population; international political and economic events that are constantly changing, and very rapid changes in technology. These changes have led to increased attendance at both 4-year postsecondary

institutions and 2-year postsecondary institutions (U.S. Department of Education, 1996) over this period.

Chain-of-Response Model

In an effort to better understand why students participate in educational endeavors some researchers have developed models to explain behavior. One such model is the Chain-of-Response (COR) developed by Cross (1981). The COR seeks to identify the variables that are pertinent to understanding student participation and the relationships that exist between them.

The COR states "participation is a chain of responses, each based on the individual's evaluation of their environment and their status therein" (Cross, 1981). The individual is looking at events in a constant flow. The flow concept implies a continuous process for an individual and their desire to participate. Participation will change students' perceptions about themselves and their ideas about education.

Cross (1981) stated that persons who lack self-confidence will not usually test themselves; therefore, they will not participate in education. Volunteering for learning would present a threat to their sense of self-esteem. This self-evaluation of each person's confidence level is the first step in the chain-of-response model.

Attitudes toward education result directly from each participant's past experience and indirectly from others "close" to the participant. A person who hated school or had an embarrassing situation will not return to that environment voluntarily.

As shown in Figure 1, Cross (1981) suggested that the linking of self-evaluation and attitudes toward education would show that there are some people who will seek out new learning experiences with a potential for personal growth. There are other people who will avoid situations that challenge their self-esteem and beliefs. This attribute can

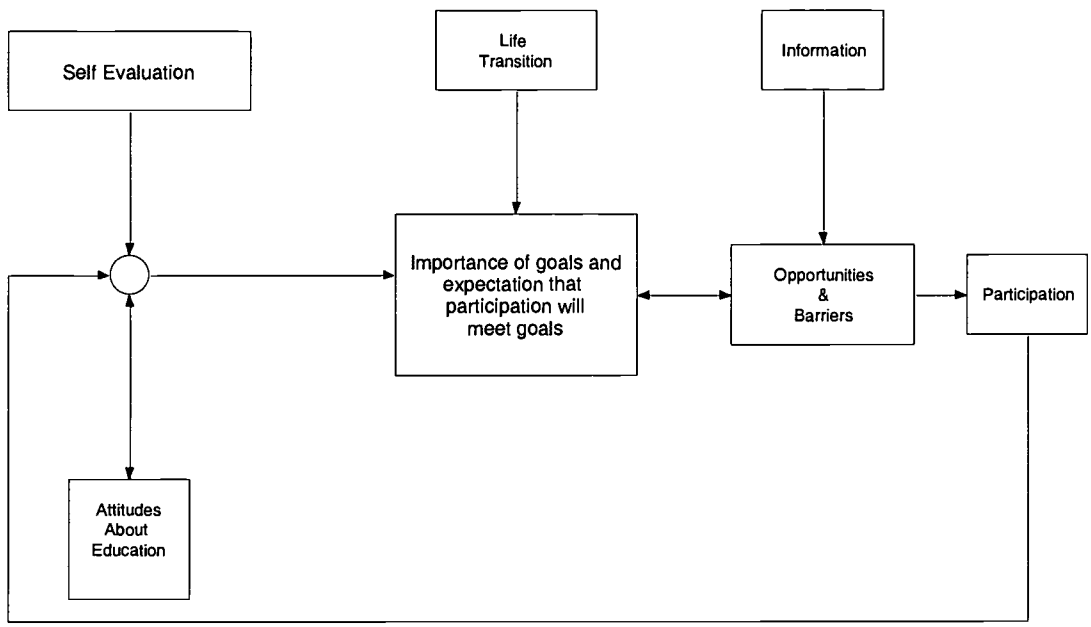

Figure 1. The Chain-of-Response Model (Cross, 1981,p.124)

be equated to the learning-oriented individual in Houle's (1961) study of participating learners.

The importance of goals to a person and the expectation of those goals being met helps to determine the level of

motivation that is present. A person with a high expectancy level will have a high level of self-esteem to be successful while the opposite is true for persons with low expectations.

Periods of change in a person's life bring about what Cross (1981, P. 127) calls "life transitions". These transitions can be as gradual adjustments in one's life or dramatic shifts in the lifestyle required for continued learning. A loss of a job or major change in family life may energize the desire to continue one's education.

Once a person is motivated to participate in education, barriers and opportunities arise and have to be dealt with accordingly. If a person has a strong level of motivation then the barriers that arise will be overcome. A person with a weak level of motivation will have difficulty dealing with those situations.

The availability of accurate information makes it possible to link motivated learners with opportunities for learning. Without such information, opportunities are lost and insurmountable barriers appear.

Early Research on Adult Motivation to Learn

Cross (1981) stated that the Chain-of-Response Model was not a predictive model but a framework for organizing thinking and research on the motivations for participation. The Chain-of-Response model (Cross, 1981) and other research

efforts (Boshier, 1971; Boshier, 1973; Boshier, 1991; Boshier & Collins, 1985; Morstain & Smart, 1974) to identify and understand what motivates people to participate in education activities stem from the classic study conducted by Houle (1961). Houle's study consisted of in-depth interviews with 22 active adult learners. The amount of motivation to learn that a student possessed was not the concern. Houle wanted to explain why learners were active and find the common areas between their activities and motivations. Many long interviews revealed three types of participants. These were goal-oriented, activity-oriented, and learning oriented.

Goal-oriented participants use learning as a way to gain a specific objective such as learning better business practices or public speaking. This person participates in learning activities without regard to what college they attend or what learning method is used. The result of obtaining the objective is accomplished by whatever method will work—taking a course, reading a book, taking a trip.

Activity-oriented participants are involved primarily for the activity itself rather than to learn a particular skill or study a subject. They may take a course or join a group to escape boredom, unhappy job situation, carry on family tradition, or to amass credits or degrees.

The third group made up of learning-oriented participants, pursue learning for its own sake. Their activities are life-long and constant with a desire to know and grow through learning. This group reads a lot, seeks jobs based on learning content, and watches serious programs on television.

Boshier's Motivational Orientations

Houle's work sparked many studies and analyses of his theory. Of those, the work of Boshier (1971, 1973, 1991; Boshier & Collins, 1985) stands as the landmark studies in the area of participation research primarily because it is the only series of studies to replicate and develop the studies of others (Courtney, 1992).

In order to test Houle's categories of motivational research, Boshier (1971) developed a factor analytical measure of the motives for attendance. Factor analysis was used to reduce a large number of responses to a more meaningful grouping of responses. He stated that there was a lack of information about adult education. Using Houle's (1961) study as his guide, Boshier chose 48 items about reasons for participating. These included reasons such as "meet new friends", "boredom", and "obtain new skills". A nine-point scale was used to indicate the amount of influence the items had on someone enrolling in classes. These ranged from "Very little influence" (1) to "Very much

influence" (9). Boshier set the format to vary the responses to reduce the influence of positional response, and conformity bias. To respect the confidentiality of the participants no names were used, only code numbers.

The sample consisted of 233 randomly selected students enrolled in a high school evening program, university extension courses, and an industrial educational association training session. Each was given the Educational Participation Scale (the 48 items mentioned above).

The responses were subjected to factor analysis resulting in 14 factors or "motivational orientations" being identified. The 14 factors underwent a second factor analysis to assess the relationships that might exist between factors. Further analysis revealed a structure very similar to the Houle categorization but with four factors.

Boshier (1971) determined that all participants were "goal-oriented" even though it was difficult to determine what some of those goals were. It was also found that participants were either "growth" or "deficiency" oriented.

The "growth" oriented participants are similar to the "learning orientation" identified in Houle's model. They always want to learn more and they just want to learn for the sake of learning.

The "deficiency" oriented participants are similar to the "activity" orientated participants. These seek to

correct their "deficiencies" by taking classes and increasing skill knowledge. These three elements match Houle's typology of goal, activity, and learning orientations.

A study by Morstain and Smart (1974) tested Houle's typology and compared it to Boshier's Educational Participation Scale. The researchers also used factor analysis and found six factors instead of the four factors that Boshier (1971) found in his study. The six factors, Social Relationships, External Expectations, Social Welfare, Professional Advancement, Escape/Stimulation, and Cognitive Interest, represent Houle's typology quite well.

Professional Advancement and External Expectations form a group very similar to Houle's goal-orientation. It does mean, however, that the goal-oriented learner could be of two types. The first would be the self-motivated individual who would set a goal and work to attain a goal for reasons of job-skill improvement, advancement, or personal satisfaction. The second type would be the individual who works toward a goal because of some suggestion from an employer or some other person.

The Morstain and Smart factors Escape/Stimulation and Social Relationships have the same intent as Houle's activity-orientation. There are two types of individuals who fall into this category. The individual who takes

courses to escape boredom or other unpleasantness would be one type and the other would be the individual who takes courses for the social contacts that are made. Either individual seeks the activity of taking the course, not the learning involved.

The factor Cognitive Interest seems very much like the learning-orientation of Houle's typology but the factor that is left, Social Welfare, doesn't seem to fit, but, in Morstain and Smart's study it showed a relationship to both Social Relationships and Cognitive Interest. This would lead one to think in terms of organized groups of educated individuals with common interests seeking social reform.

The results of Morstain and Smart (1974) validated Houle's typology but there was a major difference between the two. Houle had an interest in groups of people, while Morstain and Smart were interested in groups of reasons. An underlying theme of Houle's study was that all people were motivated to learn throughout their lives. Morstain and Smart found that there could be multiple reasons for one's participation and that the reasons could change over time.

In a major study of adult learning participants, Boshier and Collins (1985) collected data from 13,442 educational Participation Scale users. The combined data were analyzed to check how well Houle's typology fit the collected adult participants. Because Houle's typology was

based on only 22 participants, there was the feeling that there needed to be more study with larger samples.

Boshier and Collins (1985) combined 54 studies consisting of 13,442 participants. This collection was assembled as researchers voluntarily sent data to be combined with other studies, resulting in the large sample for this study.

The central issue of this study dealt with the issue of whether Houle's typology of three clusters was still a feasible solution. Cluster analysis checked these four areas:

1. Correlation between factors.
2. Structure between clusters that are correlated.
3. A pictorial tree is generated.
4. A cluster tree is more cognizant of resources than factor analysis because the factor loadings become more abstracted from the original data.

The results of this large-scale study reaffirmed the reasonability of the Houle typology but it also revealed the complexities of the realities of adult education. The goal and learning orientations were relatively clean but it took a forcing of four items to bring out the activity cluster. Twenty years have brought about a much clearer understanding of how simple the original ideas were.

The years since the formulation of Houle's typology have seen an abundance of social and legal actions to increase the participation of students in higher education. This is especially true of students with disabilities since the passing of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (Public Law 93-112, Section 504) and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336). If educational institutions are to provide better opportunities for students with disabilities then an understanding of the motivational aspects of participation for students with disabilities is required.

Students with Disabilities

Most American high school seniors expect to attend some postsecondary institution in their lifetime. The complexity of our economy and the outlook for employment makes schooling more important for students with disabilities. The attainment of educational credentials attest to skills, knowledge, and a work ethic that can direct one's attention to abilities instead of disabilities. Despite legislation to increase participation, there are many students who possess disabilities that make the educational process more difficult. It is not surprising that the level of educational attainment of students with disabilities is far less than students without disabilities (Center For The Future Of Children, 1996). Only 27% of students with

disabilities enrolled in postsecondary institutions at any time after being out of high school from three to five years. This compares to an attendance rate of 68% for students without disabilities (Marder & D'Amico, 1992).

The number of students with disabilities attending postsecondary institutions has risen and fallen at tremendous rates. There exists disagreement concerning the actual numbers of students with disabilities involved (Oliker, 1990; Ticoll, 1995). The United States Department of Education (1991) reported that students with disabilities accounted for 10.5% of all postsecondary institutions' students enrolled in 1986. Rothstein (1991) stated that in the last decade the number of students with disabilities on the nation's campuses had tripled. In 1993, the U. S. Department of Education reported that, for the year 1989, 6.6% of all postsecondary institution students were disabled. These figures contrast with those of Butler-Nalin, Marder, and Shaver (cited in Evangelauf, 1989) who found the number of students with disabilities attending postsecondary institutions at 15%. By 1993 the number of students with disabilities attending postsecondary institutions had dropped to 6.3% (U. S. Department of Education, 1996). The drop in the number of students with disabilities attending postsecondary institutions has followed a national trend of decreased attendance at

postsecondary institutions (National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research, 1993).

The inconsistency of data concerning students with disabilities is further complicated by the fact that there has been relatively little research on students with disabilities in either 4-year postsecondary institutions or 2-year postsecondary institutions (Page & Chadsey-Rusch, 1995). There is agreement among most researchers studying students with disabilities that there is a serious need for more and better data concerning the disabled population (U. S. Department of Education, 1993).

Whitten (1977), in a very early study of disabled university students, found that financial problems are the primary reason for students leaving postsecondary institutions (14% disabled, 21% non-disabled). Personal problems (family and self-oriented) also accounted for 27% of students without disabilities and 4% of students with disabilities as reasons for leaving school.

In a national survey, Lou Harris & Associates (1986) stated that only 60% of disabled American adults finish high school and of that group only 29% attend some postsecondary institutions. These numbers are about half of what their study indicated for students without disabilities. Butler-Nalin, Marder, and Shaver (cited in Evangelauf, 1989) indicated that overall 15% of all disabled adults who exited

high school participated in some form of postsecondary education in the year prior to being interviewed. Fairweather & Shaver (1991), using a national sample of adults exiting high school, found that the participation rate for students with disabilities was only one-fourth of that of students without disabilities.

The Roeher Institute (as cited in Ticoll, 1995), in a study of persons with disabilities in Canada, found that there existed a significant under-representation of disabled adults in postsecondary institutions. Only one-half as many adults with disabilities attended a postsecondary institution as did students without disabilities. Cooper and Michael (1990) stated that nationally, students with disabilities attended postsecondary institutions at only one-half the rate of students without disabilities and drop out at twice the postsecondary institutions' rate.

A study of the comparison of a group of students with learning disabilities and a group without learning disabilities (Kovach, 1992) revealed different attitudes depending on background. This study involved 92 students with learning disabilities and 134 students without learning disabilities in different academic settings. The groups were made of students from universities, community colleges, and technical schools. Students with learning disabilities revealed lower self-esteem, more external factors, and more

unique answers to questions concerning academic grades. Differences were noted regarding gender and type of postsecondary institution attended.

Summary

Students with disabilities are ideal candidates for the community college with its mission of service to all people with educational needs (Brolin & Elliott, 1984). Early work on the motivational orientations of adult learners has raised questions about the reason the subgroup of students enroll in these institutions. While decreases in the enrollment of students with disabilities at the time of the study were evident, research concerning students with disabilities and their motivations for enrolling in the community college was lacking.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of curriculum students with disabilities and to determine why they decided to participate in the community college experience. A comparison was made with curriculum students without disabilities concerning demographic data and motivations for participation.

Population

Five community colleges were randomly selected from the nine community colleges located in the 18 western-most counties of North Carolina according to a stratification procedure based on institutional size. The sample size of students at each school was determined by the institution's population of students with disabilities and students without disabilities compared to the total number of students at the five schools. The population for this study included the students with disabilities and the students without disabilities who were registered for and attended classes at Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College, Blue Ridge Community College, Haywood Community College, Mayland Community College, and McDowell Community College during the Fall Semester, 1997. The target population at

these schools matches the typical North Carolina Community College student (Shearon, Brownlee, & Johnson, 1990).

The sample for this study included a random selection of curriculum students with disabilities and a random selection of students without disabilities who registered and attended classes during Fall Semester 1997. The sample size for each of these groups of students came from procedures identified by Scheaffer, Mendenhall, and Ott (1993). The samples at each school were chosen so as to provide a confidence level of 95% with a degree of accuracy of plus or minus six percent. The samples were selected so that the results from each subgroup would have the same degree of accuracy with a 95% confidence level. These desired sample sizes were then pooled across all schools to yield the overall desired sample size. The college populations and desired sample sizes are shown in Table 1.

Instrumentation

The instrument used in this study was the Education Participation Scale (A-form) developed by Boshier (1991) (see Appendix B). The A-form is an updated version of the original EPS Boshier developed to investigate Houle's (1961) theory of motivational orientations. The first form (F-form) was developed in a study of 233 adult students at three

Table 1

COMMUNITY COLLEGE POPULATIONS AND DESIRED SAMPLE SIZES

College	SWOD	DSS	SWD	DSS
Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College	3671	121	387	117
Blue Ridge Community College	1461	48	101	30
Haywood Community College	1152	38	76	24
Mayland Community College	779	27	35	10
McDowell Community College	1054	35	60	18
Total	8117	269	659	199

Note. SWOD = Students without Disabilities; DSS = Desired Sample Size; SWD = Students With Disabilities.

institutions in New Zealand (as cited in Bova and Zelazek, 1988). Questions arose about the link to Houle's theory of motivational orientations due to the small sample (22 students) used in that study. Researchers were concern about the unequal number of items in each F-form factor. This complicated scoring according to Boshier (1988, 1991).

Because of these problems, the A-form (alternate form) was developed. The A-form was developed in five phases spread over several years. A group of 120 adult students were asked to write five reasons for participation on a piece of paper. This process produced 400 reasons written

on index cards. These cards were then sorted into groupings of factors (job related, cultural adjustments, etc.). The categorizing of these data was accomplished by two people agreeing on the naming and central meaning of each of the categories. If an item was redundant, the item was discarded. After this process was completed, the remaining items were edited for grammar. Next, 10 items that were known to obtain reliable responses were selected from the F-form. These 10 items were then added to the pool of items for the new form. This left a total of 120 items that used a 4-point scale (No Influence, Little Influence, Moderate Influence, Much Influence) identical to the F-form. The next step would be to reduce the 120 items to a more manageable group.

The second phase consisted of giving the 120 items to a group of 280 students. There were 257 instruments that were deemed as appropriate for further analysis. Factor analysis was used to produce a form called the A-form that contained 42 items.

The third and fourth phases consisted of giving the A-form to 427 students in community colleges, 31 prisoners in a prison environment, 56 students in a university undergraduate nursing program, and 74 students in diploma programs. In addition, 65 students in Grade 11 equivalency classes completed the A-form twice in six weeks.

Demographic data were also collected in addition to the responses to the 42 items of the A-form.

Phase five consisted of collecting data for validity purposes. Nine immigrant students with different backgrounds were selected and their A-forms were removed from the group. An independent interviewer with no access to the A-Form scores performed an in-depth interview about the student's family and personal background information. The students were then handed seven cards with the name of the items comprising the seven factors of the A-form. The students were shown a chart and asked to rate the influence of each factor in their participation in college courses. The student's A-form scores, researchers' ratings of the students, and the student's responses to the seven factors were analyzed and discrepancy scores calculated.

Construct validity represents the extent to which a test can be shown to measure a hypothetical construct, that is, "a theoretical construction about human behavior" (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 255). To determine construct validity a combination of logical and empirical procedures are involved. There are three areas: defining the constructs that lie beneath the test, deriving hypotheses from the theory involving the test, and testing the hypotheses empirically. The chief evidence pertaining to construct validity is the unambiguous nature of

the orientations that stemmed from factor analysis of the A-form data.

Responses from the 120 item instrument in phase two were tested for correlation, factor analyzed, and, in a desire to produce uncorrelated factors, subjected to orthogonal or varimax rotation. Several different factor solutions were examined. Items loading on more than one factor and those with a factor loading of less than .50 were dropped. A seven-factor, 42 item solution was adopted because there were no multiple-factor items, there were high loading items in each factor, the factors had meaning, and, the factors had a loading of over .50. The seven factors were:

1. Communication Improvement—participating to improve written and verbal skills
2. Social Contact—participating to meeting people and making friends
3. Educational Preparation—participating to remedy past educational deficiencies and prepare for higher education
4. Professional Advancement—participating to improve status in a current job or moving to a better one
5. Family Togetherness—participating to bridge generation gaps and improving relationships in families

6. Social Stimulation—participating to escape unhappy situations, boredom, loneliness
7. Cognitive Interest—participating to seek knowledge for its "own sake" or satisfying an inquiring mind

These seven factors constituted the final version of the A-form of the EPS (Boshier, 1988; Boshier, 1991). In a large study of 1,142 students the construct validity of the EPS was empirically supported (Fujita-Starck, 1996; Fujita-Starck & Thompson, 1994). A description of what items constitute the Educational Participation Scale and the scoring mechanism is shown in Table 2.

The reliability of an instrument refers to the consistency of its measurement (Long, Convey, & Chwalek, 1985). The internal consistency or the average correlation of each factor was examined by calculating coefficient alpha for each factor. These alpha values from a low of .76 to a high of .91 were all high enough to be satisfactory. A second procedure, test/retest, was performed. The EPS was given twice to a group of students approximately six weeks apart. Correlation coefficients were calculated on the 42 items as well as the scale scores. These coefficients were all significant. These tests indicated that the EPS was internally consistent and stable over time.

Table 2

DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVEN SCALES OF THE EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION SCALE

Scale	Items	Scale Range
Communication Improvement	1,8,15,22,29,36	6 - 24
Social Contact	2,9,16,23,30,37	6 - 24
Educational Preparation	3,10,17,24,31,38	6 - 24
Professional Advancement	4,11,18,25,32,39	6 - 24
Family Togetherness	5,12,19,26,33,40	6 - 24
Social Stimulation	6,13,20,27,34,41	6 - 24
Cognitive Interest	7,14,21,28,35,42	6 - 24

Note: Each scale contains 6 items. The item responses are scored as follows: 1 = No Influence; 2 = Little Influence; 3 = Moderate Influence; 4 = Much Influence. Minimum score on each scale is 6(1 x 6 items) and maximum score is 24(4 x 6 items).

Data Collection Procedures

The population for this study consisted of curriculum students attending the five colleges during the Fall Semester, 1997. This included both students without disabilities and students with disabilities. At each institution, the office of Student Services maintains records of all students who choose to identify themselves as having a disability. The Vice-President of Student Affairs at each of the five community colleges identified a random list of students without disabilities and a random list of students with disabilities who attended their respective colleges during the Fall Semester, 1997. Based on the sample sizes in Table 1, samples of 269 students without disabilities and 199 students with disabilities were used.

A list of mailing labels was generated for those students identified in the random sampling.

An instrument package consisting of a Cover Letter of Introduction (see Appendix A), an Educational Participation Scale questionnaire (see Appendix B), and a stamped addressed return envelope was mailed to each student identified by Student Services at each college. This resulted in the return of approximately 125 responses for a return rate of 27%. After two weeks a follow-up postcard was mailed to each student as a reminder to return the questionnaire. There resulted in another 70 additional

responses for a return rate of 42%. After an additional two weeks a third follow-up postcard was mailed resulting in an additional 3 responses. This gave a total response rate of 42.3%. The follow-up postcards were a total mailing because no records were recorded to track which student had returned the survey. This was done to protect the privacy of each student. The methods employed were adapted from those described by Dillman (1978). Those students with disabilities that prevent them from reading the survey were allowed to have someone read the survey to them.

Data Analysis

Inferential and descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected in this study. Descriptive statistics allow for summarizing the data collected in a research sample. Inferential statistics allow for making inferences about an entire population by analyzing a small sample and are concerned with determining how likely it is that results based on a sample are the same results that would have been obtained for the entire population (Borg & Gall, 1989; Gay, 1992).

The purpose of hypothesis testing is to help draw conclusions about population parameters based on results observed in a random sample (Norusis, 1990). All hypotheses

were tested at the .05 alpha level of significance. The t-test for independent samples was used to test the differences between students with disabilities and students without disabilities on the factors of the Educational Participation Scale. Three important assumptions underlie this test. They are:

1. The test variable is normally distributed in each of the two populations (as defined by the grouping variable.
2. The variances of the normally distributed test variable for the populations are equal.
3. The cases represent a random sample from the population, and the scores on the test variable are independent of each other.

If any of these assumptions is violated then the t-test should not be trusted (Green, Salkind, & Akey, 1997). The data collected for these hypotheses meet these three criteria.

The chi-square test is for data in the form of frequency counts occurring in two or more mutually exclusive categories. Thus, chi-square is appropriate for nominal data (Gay, 1992) and was used to test the association of demographic variables with disability status. An assumption of this test is that each observation is independent of the rest of the sample.

ANOVA was used to compare the different types of disabilities. The purpose of analysis of variance is to check if there are significant differences between the types of disabilities with the individual factors on the Educational Participation Scale. If significant differences are found, a post hoc test must be used to determine which group differs from each other (Borg & Gall, 1989).

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION OF DATA AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of curriculum students with disabilities and to identify their reasons for participation in the community college experience. The response of curriculum students with disabilities was contrasted with those of curriculum students without disabilities. The Educational Participation Scale was used to assess reasons for participation.

Response Rates

The response rates for each subgroup at each institution are presented in Table 3, which shows 42.3% returned completed surveys. The findings are presented in this chapter. The large number of non-responses could introduce the concept of non-response bias in survey research. Henry (1990) suggested that the sample might not truly represent the population if non-response bias is present. The follow-up methods available for handling non-response bias were not available to this researcher. A condition of the agreement between the researcher and the colleges in this study for access to addresses of students with disabilities in this study was that only mail surveys would be used.

Table 3

COMMUNITY COLLEGE RESPONSE RATES

	SWOD			SWD			Total		
College	D	O	R	D	O	R	D	O	TR
ABTCC	121	55	45.5%	117	50	42.7%	238	105	22.4%
BRCC	48	18	37.5%	30	10	33.3%	78	28	6.0%
HCC	38	12	31.6%	24	9	37.5%	62	21	4.5%
MCC	27	14	51.9%	10	10	100%	37	24	5.1%
MTCC	35	13	37.1%	18	7	38.9%	53	20	4.3%
Combined	269	112	41.6%	199	86	43.2%	468	198	42.3%

Note. SWOD = Students without Disabilities; SWD = Students With Disabilities; D = Desired; O = Obtained; R = Return Percentage; TR = Percent of Total Returned.
ABTCC = Asheville Buncombe Technical Community College; BRCC = Blue Ridge Community College; HCC = Haywood Community College; MCC = Mayland Community College; MTCC = McDowell Technical Community College.

There was a feeling that an extraordinary effort must be made to protect these students. The fact that a student possessed a disability was only to be revealed by that student. As a result, the researcher agreed to have two follow-ups that were total mail-outs so individuals could not be singled out. Students were not "tracked" in order that privacy could be maintained.

One method of assessing the potential for non-response bias, however, involves a comparison of the characteristics of the sample to known population parameters. Table 4 shows a comparison of the five-school population used for this study to the students of this sample. The sample of students from the five community colleges in Western North Carolina had the same characteristics as those exhibited by the population. This sample resulted from random selection of the individuals to receive the surveys and the colleges performed the random selection. Although there were slight differences, it appears that the sample profile is similar to the population profile, in terms of gender, race, and work status.

Analysis of Hypothesis Testing

A Chi-square test of independence tested the relationship between demographic variables and disability status under Hypothesis 1-7. The t-test for independent

samples was used to test Hypothesis 8-15. ANOVA was used to test Hypothesis 16-22.

Table 4

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FIVE-SCHOOL POPULATION AND THE RESULTING SAMPLE

	Five School Population		Sample	
	f	%	f	%
Gender:				
Female	5066	57	128	65
Male	3832	43	70	35
Total	8898	100	198	100
Race:				
White	8290	93	187	94
Non-White	608	7	11	6
Total	8898	100	198	100
Work Status				
Full Time	2955	33	55	28
Part Time	3425	39	70	35
No Work	2518	28	73	37
Total	8898	100	198	100

Research Question 1:

Who are the curriculum students with disabilities and curriculum students without disabilities that are attending community colleges in Western North Carolina and what are their demographic characteristics?

As shown in Table 5 the majority of students with disabilities are female (54.7%). They are predominately white, work either part-time or do not work at all, and most (74.4%) do not have children in the home. Although not shown in the table, the mean age of the students with disabilities was 34.

As shown in Table 6, the majority of students with disabilities are single (54.7%). One-half reported working at least 20 hours per week, while 34.9% were not working at all. Most of these students are females who either work part-time or are not working. Obtaining a two-year degree or transferring to a four-year college or university is the main educational goal of students with disabilities.

Research Question 2:

Are there any relationships between demographic variables and disability status?

Ho1: There is no relationship between disability status and gender. As shown in Table 4, females constituted 65% of the students enrolled in curriculum programs. Table 5 shows that based on disability status, females without disabilities (n=112) are 72.3% of the total number of students without disabilities. Females with disabilities (n=47) account for 54.7% of students with disabilities.

Table 5

GENDER, RACE, CHILDREN PRESENT IN THE HOME, AND WORK STATUS OF CURRICULUM STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES

	SWD		SWOD		Chi	Cramer's V	p
	f	%	f	%	Square		
Gender:							
Female	47	54.7	81	72.3			
Male	39	45.3	31	27.7			
Total	86	100	112	100	6.646	.183	.010
Race:							
White	80	93.0	107	96.4			
Non-White	6	7.0	5	3.6			
Total	86	100	112	100	4.766	.155	.312
Children In the Home							
NO	64	74.4	63	56.2			
YES	22	25.6	49	43.8			
Total	86	100	112	100	6.982	.188	.030
Work Status							
Full Time	23	26.7	52	46.4			
Part Time	33	38.4	37	33.0			
No Work	30	34.9	23	20.6			
Total	86	100	11	100	9.109	.214	.011

Note. SWOD = Students without Disabilities, SWD = Students With Disabilities.

Table 6

HOURS WORKED PER WEEK, MARITAL STATUS, AND EDUCATIONAL GOAL OF CURRICULUM STUDENTS WITH AND WITHOUT DISABILITIES

	SWD		SWOD		Chi	Cramer's V	p
	f	%	f	%	Square		
Hours Worked per Week							
None	30	34.9	23	20.5			
0-19	13	15.1	13	11.6			
20-40	27	31.4	39	34.8			
40+	16	18.6	37	33.1			
Total	86	100	112	100	11.711	.243	.039
Marital Status							
Divorced	15	17.4	12	10.7			
Married	24	27.9	45	40.2			
Single	47	54.7	55	49.1			
Total	86	100	112	100	4.450	.151	.207
Educational Goal							
Transfer	27	31.4	35	31.3			
Two Year Degree	40	46.5	58	51.8			
Other	19	22.1	19	16.9			
Total	86	100	112	100	1.842	.243	.039

Note. SWOD = Students without Disabilities, SWD = Students With Disabilities.

The chi-square value of 6.646 was statistically significant (p=.010). The null hypothesis was rejected. There exists a relationship between disability status and gender. It appears that students with disabilities are less

likely to be female. The relationship is not very strong as shown by the low value of Cramer's V (.183).

Ho2: There is no relationship between disability status and race. As shown in Table 5, 93%(n=80) of students with disabilities are white. Students without disabilities show similar numbers (96.4%, n=107). The chi-square value of 4.766 is not statistically significant (p=.312). The null hypothesis was retained. There is no relationship between disability status and race.

Ho3: There is no relationship between disability status and children at home. As shown in Table 5, children were present in the home of 35.7% (n=71) of students who were surveyed. Of these, 31% (n=22) were in homes of parents with disabilities while 69% (n=49) were in homes of parents without disabilities. The chi-square value of 6.982 was statistically significant (p=.030). The null hypothesis was rejected. There exists a relationship between disability status and having children present in the home. It appears that students with disabilities are less likely to have children in the home. The relationship is not very strong as shown by the low value of Cramer's V (.188).

Ho4: There is no relationship between disability status and work status. As shown in Table 5, students who work accounted for 73.2% (n=128) of the students in this sample. Of the total students with disabilities, 65.1%

(n=56) worked either full-time or part-time. Full-time or part-time working students accounted for 79.5% (n=89) of the students without disabilities. The chi-square value of 9.109 is statistically significant (p=.011). The null hypothesis was rejected. There exists a relationship between disability status and work status. It appears that students with disabilities are less likely to work. The relationship is not very strong as shown by the low value of Cramer's V (.214).

Ho5: There is no relationship between disability status and hours worked per week. As shown in Table 6, 60.1% (n=119) of all students worked more than 20 hours per week. One-half of the students with disabilities worked 20+ hours per week. Of the students without disabilities, 64.8% worked more than 20 hours per week. The chi-square value of 11.711 is statistically significant (p=.039). The null hypothesis was rejected. There exists a relationship between disability status and hours worked. It appears that students with disabilities work fewer hours per week. The relationship is not very strong as shown by the low value of Cramer's V (.243).

Ho6: There is no relationship between disability status and marital status. As shown in Table 6, 27.3% (n=24) of the students with disabilities were married while 17% (n=15) were divorced. Married students without

disabilities (n=111) accounted for 40.5% (n=45) while 10.8% (n=12) were divorced. The chi-square value of 4.450 is not statistically significant (p=.207). The null hypothesis was retained. There appears to be no relationship between disability status and marital status.

Table 7

MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS FOR THE AGES OF STUDENTS AND DISABILITY STATUS

Disability Status	n	M	SD	t	p
SWD	86	33.97	11.57	2.121	.035
SWOD	112	30.59	10.73		

Note. SWOD = Students without Disabilities,
SWD = Students With Disabilities.

Ho7: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of age. As shown in Table 7, students with disabilities (n=86) had an average age of 33.97 (SD=11.57). Students without disabilities (n=111) had a mean age of 30.34 (SD=10.46). The calculated t-value was 2.272 (p = .024), indicating a significant difference. Ho7 was rejected. Students with disabilities appear to represent a group that is significantly older.

Research Question 3:

Why are students with disabilities attending community colleges and what are their educational goals?

Ho8: There is no relationship between disability status and educational goal. As shown in Table 6, two categories of students' educational goals, Transfer and Two year Degree, account for 80.8% (n=160) of all students. Students with disabilities account for 22.1% (n=19) while students without disabilities account for 16.9% (n=19) of students with educational goals other than College transfer or Two year Degree. The chi-square value of 1.842 is not statistically significant (p=.039). The null hypothesis was retained. There appears to be no relationship between disability status and educational goals.

The data shown in Table 8 are the results of a study of 845 participants in adult education activities completed by Boshier (1991) and the sample of community college students from five Western North Carolina community colleges. All participants used the Educational Participation Scale. The Communication Improvement and the Educational Preparation scales show a much lower mean for the community college sample. These scales deal with improving communication skills and being prepared for the college environment academically. Students with disabilities were

closer to the A-Form mean than their non-disabled counterparts.

Table 8

MEANS AND STANDARD DEVIATIONS FOR THE FACTORS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION SCALE

Factor		n	M	SD
Communication Improvement	A-Form	845	15.65	5.84
	SWD	86	10.29	4.31
	SWOD	112	9.84	4.11
Social Contact	A-Form	845	11.97	4.90
	SWD	86	11.33	4.67
	SWOD	112	9.24	4.06
Educational Preparation	A-Form	845	17.80	4.86
	SWD	86	15.92	4.41
	SWOD	112	14.24	4.36
Professional Advancement	A-Form	845	18.52	4.47
	SWD	86	19.40	4.30
	SWOD	112	18.92	4.32
Family Togetherness	A-Form	845	9.79	4.17
	SWD	86	8.66	2.90
	SWOD	112	8.25	3.10
Social Stimulation	A-Form	845	10.25	4.07
	SWD	86	15.92	4.41
	SWOD	112	9.30	3.59
Cognitive Interest	A-Form	845	16.81	4.11
	SWD	86	17.52	4.28
	SWOD	112	15.93	4.30

Note: The data in row A-Form are from "Psychometric Properties of the Alternative Form of the Education Participation Scale" by R. Boshier, 1991, Adult Education Quarterly, 41(3), 150-167; SWOD = Students without Disabilities, SWD = Students With Disabilities.

Social Contact and Family Togetherness show a lower mean for the community college sample but the differences are small. These scales are concerned with improving family relationships and making friends. Students with disabilities were closer to the A-Form mean than their non-disabled counterparts.

Higher means are shown by the Professional Advancement and Cognitive Interest scales. These scales concern improving current job status and acquiring knowledge just for knowledge's sake. In both cases the students with disabilities have higher means that either the A-Form group or students without disabilities.

Social Stimulation, or the escaping the feelings of loneliness and boredom, shows a much higher mean for the students from the community college sample. The mean for students with disabilities was over 50% higher than the mean for the A-Form or the students without disabilities.

The significant factors for the community college study were Social Contact, Social Stimulation, Educational Preparation, and Cognitive Interest. In each of the scales the standard deviation or "measure of variability" (Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 344) values are very close to each other. While there are differences, the comparison shows a lot of similarity concerning the scales that were important for the students with disabilities in the community college sample.

Research Question 4

Is there a difference in the motivational orientations of students with disabilities and students without disabilities in the community college environment?

The data in Table 9 represent a comparison of students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of the factors of the Educational Participation Scale.

Ho9: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Communication Improvement Factor. As shown in Table 9, students with disabilities (n=86) had a mean Communication Improvement Factor of 10.29 (SD = 4.31). Students without disabilities (n=112) had a mean Communication Improvement Factor of 9.84 (SD=4.11). The calculated t-value was .746 (p = .457) indicating no significant difference. Ho9 was retained.

Ho10: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Contact Factor. As shown in Table 9, students with disabilities (n=86) had a mean Social Contact Factor of 11.33 (SD = 4.67). Students without disabilities (n=112) had a mean Social Contact Factor of 9.24 (SD = 4.06). The calculated t-value was 3.29 (p = .001) indicating a significant difference. Ho10 was rejected. Students with

disabilities appear to be more cognizant of Social Contact and its impact on the individual.

Table 9

MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND T-TEST FOR EQUALITY OF MEANS FOR THE FACTORS OF THE EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION SCALE

Factor		n	M	SD	t	p
Communication Improvement	SWD	86	10.29	4.31	.746	.457
	SWOD	112	9.84	4.11		
Social Contact	SWD	86	11.33	4.67	2.983	.003
	SWOD	112	9.24	4.06		
Educational Preparation	SWD	86	15.92	4.41	2.666	.008
	SWOD	112	14.24	4.36		
Professional Advancement	SWD	86	19.40	4.30	.770	.443
	SWOD	112	18.92	4.32		
Family Togetherness	SWD	86	8.66	2.90	.952	.342
	SWOD	112	8.25	3.10		
Social Stimulation	SWD	86	15.92	4.41	2.983	.003
	SWOD	112	9.30	3.59		
Cognitive Interest	SWD	86	17.52	4.28	2.577	.011
	SWOD	112	15.93	4.30		

Note. SWOD = Students without Disabilities, SWD = Students With Disabilities.

Ho11: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of

scores on the Educational Preparation Factor. As shown in Table 9, students with disabilities (n=86) had a mean Educational Preparation Factor of 15.92 (SD = 4.41). Students without disabilities (n=112) had a mean Educational Preparation Factor of 14.24 (SD=4.36). The calculated t-value was 2.666 (p = .008) indicating a significant difference. Ho11 was rejected. Students with disabilities appear to be more concerned with their educational preparation.

Ho12: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Professional Advancement Factor. As shown in Table 9, students with disabilities (n=86) had a mean Professional Advancement Factor of 19.40 (SD = 4.30). Students without disabilities (n=112) had a mean Professional Advancement Factor of 18.92 (SD=4.32). The calculated t-value was .770 (p = .443) indicating no significant difference. Ho12 was retained.

Ho13: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Family Togetherness Factor. As shown in Table 9, students with disabilities (n=86) had a mean Family Togetherness Factor of 8.66 (SD= 2.90). Students without disabilities (n=112) had a mean Family Togetherness Factor of 8.25 (SD= 3.09). The calculated t-value was .952 (p =

.342) indicating no significant differences. Ho13 was retained.

Ho14: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Stimulation Factor. As shown in Table 9, students with disabilities (n=86) had a mean Social Stimulation Factor of 10.88 (SD = 3.77). Students without disabilities (n=112) had a mean Social Stimulation Factor of 9.30 (SD = 3.59). The calculated t-value was 2.983 (p = .003) indicating a significant difference. Ho14 was rejected. Students with disabilities appear to be more concerned with escaping loneliness and boredom.

Ho15: There is no difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities in terms of scores on the Cognitive Interest Factor. As shown in Table 9, students with disabilities (n=86) had a mean Cognitive Interest Factor of 17.52 (SD = 4.28). Students without disabilities (n=112) had a mean Cognitive Interest Factor of 15.93 (SD = 4.30). The calculated t-value was 2.577 (p = .011) indicating a significant difference. Ho15 was rejected. Students with disabilities appear to be more concerned with learning for the sake of learning.

Ho16: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Communication Improvement Factor. As shown in Table 10,

ANOVA revealed that no significant relationship existed between the different types of disabilities and the Communication Improvement Factor. Mean scores ranged from 9.8 to 11.1 with an F-value of .485, which was not significant. Ho16 was retained.

Ho17: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Contact Factor. As shown in Table 10, ANOVA revealed that no significant relationship existed between the different types of disabilities and the Social Contact Factor. Mean scores ranged from 10.7 to 12.2 with an F-value of .194, which was not significant. Ho17 was retained.

Ho18: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Educational Preparation Factor. As shown in Table 10, ANOVA revealed that a significant relationship existed between the different types of disabilities and the Educational Preparation Factor. Mean scores ranged from 12.5 to 17.2 with an F-value of 3.66, which was significant. Ho18 was rejected. There appears to be differences between students with different disabilities. Table 11 shows that there is a significant difference between the disability types of Hearing and Learning on the Educational Preparation factor. Tukey's Least Significant Difference Test(LSD) was used for this comparison.

Table 10

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION SCALE AND TYPES OF DISABILITIES

Factor	n	M	SD	F	p
Communication				.485	.694
Hearing	12	9.8	3.8		
Learning	32	9.8	4.3		
Other	27	11.1	4.6		
Orthopedic	15	10.1	4.3		
Social Contact				.194	.900
Hearing	12	12.0	6.2		
Learning	32	11.2	4.9		
Other	27	11.6	4.3		
Orthopedic	15	10.7	3.8		
Educational				3.66	.016
Hearing	12	12.5	4.7		
Learning	32	17.2	3.3		
Other	27	16.0	5.1		
Orthopedic	15	15.7	3.6		
Professional				.614	.608
Hearing	12	19.3	5.2		
Learning	32	18.7	4.2		
Other	27	20.2	3.9		
Orthopedic	15	19.5	4.7		

Table 10 (continued)

ANALYSIS OF VARIANCE FOR EDUCATIONAL PARTICIPATION SCALE AND TYPES OF DISABILITIES

Factor	n	M	SD	F	p
Family				1.60	.196
Hearing	12	10.1	4.1		
Learning	32	8.5	2.4		
Other	27	8.0	2.6		
Orthopedic	15	9.0	3.2		
Social				1.22	.307
Hearing	12	12.4	4.0		
Learning	32	10.7	3.7		
Other	27	10.1	3.4		
Orthopedic	15	11.5	4.2		
Cognitive				.183	.908
Hearing	12	17.7	4.2		
Learning	32	17.1	4.4		
Other	27	17.9	4.4		
Orthopedic	15	17.7	4.3		

Ho19: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Professional Advancement Factor. As shown in Table 10, ANOVA revealed that no significant relationship existed between the different types of disabilities and the Professional Advancement Factor. Mean scores ranged from 18.7 to 20.2

with an F-value of .614, which was not significant. Ho19 was retained.

Table 11

SIGNIFICANT POST HOC TESTS COMPARING DIFFERENT TYPES OF DISABILITIES AND THE EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION FACTOR OF THE EDUCATIONAL PREPARATION SCALE.

Disability Type	Mean	p
Hearing	4.72	.001
Learning	3.50	.019

Ho20: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Family Togetherness Factor. As shown in Table 10, ANOVA revealed that no significant relationship existed between the different types of disabilities and the Family Togetherness Factor. Mean scores ranged from 8.0 to 10.1 with an F-value of 1.60, which was not significant. Ho20 was retained.

Ho21: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Social Stimulation Factor. As shown in Table 10, ANOVA revealed that no significant relationship existed between the different types of disabilities and the Social Stimulation Factor. Mean scores ranged from 10.1 to 12.4 with an F-

value of 1.22, which was not significant. Ho21 was retained.

Ho22: There is no difference between students with different disabilities in terms of scores on the Cognitive Interest Factor. As shown in Table 10, ANOVA revealed that no significant relationship existed between the different types of disabilities and the Cognitive Interest Factor. Mean scores ranged from 17.1 to 17.9 with an F-value of .183, which was not significant. Ho22 was retained.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to develop a profile of curriculum students with disabilities and to determine why they decided to participate in the community college experience. A comparison was made to curriculum students without disabilities concerning demographic data and motivations for participation.

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-336) has created the possibility of more opportunities for students with disabilities. By opening the colleges to access by students with disabilities there exists an easier path to participation. Determining if there are differences between students with disabilities and students without disabilities will show colleges if there needs to be different approaches taken to aid students in their transition to college. Several general findings emerged from this study.

Findings

Gender of Students with Disabilities

There was a higher percentage of women among students without disabilities (72.3%) than there was with

disabilities (54.7). The majority of students attending community colleges in North Carolina are women (North Carolina Community College System, 1997) but fewer women with disabilities enter college. Other factors in the lives of these women coupled with factors associated with having a disability could serve as an impediment to participation.

Children in the Home of Students with Disabilities

Family responsibilities enter into the decision as to whether or not to participate in college (Ticoll, 1995). The fact that there are children in the home adds an added dimension to life that could impact enrollment decisions. Participating in an educational experience becomes a much lower priority when a family is involved (Ticoll, 1995). Trying to balance a family life and the educational environment is a monumental task. Students with disabilities have shown a concern for this problem in that are fewer homes with children.

Social Interaction for Students with Disabilities

Making friends and meeting other people in the community college appears to be more important to students with disabilities than students without disabilities. The Americans with Disabilities Act sets in motion the legal mechanism that opened areas previously closed to many

persons with disabilities. This meant that many people with disabilities would now have more avenues available to meet other people and to attend college. It is extremely important for students in the community college to have the freedom to meet others in the college context and this appears to be even more important for students with disabilities. Having friends and being accepted by your peers is an important key to succeeding in the educational experience.

Academic Preparation of Students with Disabilities

Adequate academic preparation is a concern for students with disabilities at their current level of participation. Students with disabilities have a greater concern for their academic preparation because most have not followed the traditional path to college as evidenced by the age of students with disabilities. The average age of students with disabilities is almost 3.5 years older than the average age of students without disabilities. Given this nontraditional path to the community college, the resources necessary to compete in the academic setting have traditionally not been provided to students with disabilities. This has hampered the educational preparation of those students. As a result, this group seems particularly motivated to overcome the obstacles imposed by the nontraditional academic background. Within the group of

students with disabilities those students with Hearing and Learning disabilities appear to be more concerned about academic preparation.

Professional Advancement for Students With Disabilities

Improving performance in the present situation at work or preparing for a better job was not any more important to students with disabilities than to students without disabilities. The factors that make life difficult for the students with disabilities (Center For The Future of Children, 1996) do not hinder them from working. A greater number of students without disabilities work than students with disabilities. Both groups of students have a significant number of students who work. Both groups of students appear equally motivated to seek professional advancement.

Social Contact for Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities are more likely than their non-disabled counterparts to seek an education so that they might have more contact that is social with other students and faculty members. It may be that there are additional obstacles associated with having a disability in today's society that make it necessary for those with disabilities to seek out social contacts in settings such as the college environment. Participating in an educational experience

could help a person escape elements such as loneliness and boredom.

Data On Students With Disabilities

Detailed data concerning students with disabilities are not readily available (North Carolina Community College System, 1997; U. S. Department of Education, 1996). The information that exists concerns the total student population. The categorization of data on students with disabilities concerning disability type is lacking as well as social and economic data.

Community College Administration and Students with Disabilities

This researcher found some community college administrators who continue to consider their students with disabilities as a "special" group. The feeling of being "special" did not seem to consider students with disabilities as people with special talents or special needs. The inquiries for permission to survey students with disabilities by this researcher found some administrators considering "special" as meaning protection. There was hesitancy by some to allow the use of students with disabilities in this research.

The "open door" concept of community colleges and the Americans with Disabilities Act provide an opportunity for

students with disabilities to deal with many of the additional issues imposed by their disability. The lack of opportunities before the passage of The Americans with Disabilities Act and The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 for students with disabilities is noted in the low college attendance rates shown in the research (Ticoll, 1995).

Conclusions

Students with disabilities represent an ever-increasing portion of the student population attending community colleges today. This group, with its legal mandate of the Americans with Disabilities Act and visible needs, present a issue and opportunity that must be addressed uniquely at each institution. Given the findings from this study, the following conclusions can be summarized from the Western North Carolina experience:

The students in this sample of five Western North Carolina community colleges are heavily skewed in that a disproportionate number of students are white. The sample compares favorably with the population of the five schools that took part in this survey. This does present a problem for colleges if they are striving for their student population to obtain a truly global perspective in our competitive world.

The majority of students attending community college in Western North Carolina are female. The population and

the sample of the five schools used for this study were predominantly female. This trend continued when looking at students with disabilities and students without disabilities as females constitute a majority. This fact, in itself, brings about many questions. Women have their own set of problems due to the problems that society presents to them. When gender is examined through the lens of someone with disabilities, a whole new set of circumstances must be addressed.

Working part-time or full-time was a characteristic of all students. This aspect is not surprising because the average age of students is at least 10 years greater than that of students just entering college from high school. A major portion of the students worked enough hours per week to indicate that support for others was a consideration. Most students in the community college system today must work to support themselves or have other family responsibilities. Realizing that fact for students with disabilities brings even more complexity to the picture.

Most students attending community college in western North Carolina, whether with disabilities or not, are there to obtain a two-year degree or transfer to a 4-year college or university. These students would fall into the same categories when being advised or helped with their course choices to obtain their degree.

Social issues are a major concern of students with disabilities. Acceptance by their classmates is very important. This need of acceptance by their peers overrides other areas of concern that may be of more importance to students with out disabilities. The student with disabilities has a need to make his/her disability seem as minimal as possible.

Education preparation is an area of difference that is not surprising. Before the passage of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act, colleges were not prepared to handle the unique needs of students with disabilities. Each college must make an effort to meet those needs. Students with disabilities are more concerned that their academic preparation is not adequate to meet the requirements of the educational goal they have set for themselves than students without disabilities are. Within the group of students with disabilities, those with a Hearing or a Learning disability have a greater concern about their academic preparation.

There exist differences in the quest of knowledge between students with disabilities and students without disabilities. This factor is related to the social aspect of needing inclusion. Attending college is a way to obtain that inclusion and gaining additional knowledge is secondary.

A search of the Electronic Resource in Education Clearinghouse for Community Colleges found no research that used this particular instrument to measure participation in community colleges (Elizabeth Foote, personal communication, July 18, 1997. This researcher used Boshier's Educational Participation Scale because it provided a proven avenue to obtain data concerning adult students and their reasons for participation (Fujita-Starck, 1996).

Recommendations

While there are differences between students with disabilities and students without disabilities, the major thrust of this difference deals with the social aspect of a student's college experience. The areas of social acceptance and self-worth constitute the platform on which a student with disabilities builds his/her college experience.

Colleges that are experiencing increased enrollment of students with disabilities must build in the support mechanisms not only to encourage participation but to insure that the student has a viable path to complete his/her objective. This does not mean that the standards for students with disabilities need to be lower but that efforts should be made to provide opportunities that give these students the same level of academic proficiency that students without disabilities enjoy. There must be the consideration that, as education institutions, community

colleges "take students from where they are and take them to where they want to be" (North Carolina Department of Community Colleges, 1993, p. 55).

To accomplish that goal means, in many aspects, a new approach, to encourage faculty to try methods other than the traditional approaches they have been using. Professional development to improve the understanding of what constitutes a disability, how it affects the physiology of an individual, and methods for the inclusion of students with disabilities is critical for faculty and administration (Asselin, 1993). The trend toward more students with disabilities attending college is ever increasing and understanding the difference between students with disabilities and students without disabilities is essential.

Further study to compile a more complete set of data concerning students with disabilities is warranted. This should include not only demographic data but also comparisons among different types of disabilities. There simply is not enough information that provides details about the student with disabilities and his/her fit in the community college environment. This lack of information is evident at the local, state, and national levels. The U. S. Department of Education is in the early stages of developing a survey on students with disabilities and possibly linking to current U. S. Department of Education data collections

(U. S. Department of Education, 1998). When this survey is completed, it will simplify the process of understanding the student with disabilities.

The "aging" of our population is also prevalent in our community colleges. While our students are older on the average, the student with disabilities is a great deal older than their non-disabled counterpart. Colleges must take into account the age of disabled students when planning support programs and adjust their programs for older students.

In summary, several significant differences exist in the motivational orientations of students with disabilities and students without disabilities in western North Carolina's community colleges; i.e., they are attending school for different reasons. Students with disabilities are more inclined to attend a community college for friendship and social contact to escape loneliness and boredom. There is also a greater concern among students with disabilities concerning the adequacy of past education preparation for college. There is also concern about being well prepared for further educational pursuits. The student with disabilities attends a community college to satisfy a search for knowledge. Administrators and instructional staff members in community colleges must understand these differences. Programs and services must be designed that

allow these students to establish the social connections that are so important, overcome past academic deficiencies, and pursue their studies based on "cognitive interest" that will not necessarily lead to a specific degree. Proactive leadership can lead to the development of programs and services that will allow these students to meet their unique needs and make community colleges the institutions of choice for this group of adults.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
Sample Letter to Students

Dear Student:

As a currently enrolled student attending a community college your reasons for attendance are very important. The only way to discover those reasons is to ask you. The information you provide will be helpful in understanding why people attend community colleges and provide help in improving the quality of the community college experience.

You are part of a small number of students in selected community colleges in Western North Carolina being asked to give your opinion. In order for the results to represent all students it is very important that the survey be completed and returned.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality . The questionnaire has a reference number for the purpose of collecting data about your school. At the bottom of this letter is a place for you to give permission to use your opinions in this research. Please sign and return with the completed questionnaire.

The results of this research will help community colleges better understand student's reasons for attending. The information gathered will help to improve the community college environment and support for students.

Please take about 15 minutes to complete the questionnaire, sign the permission page, return both in the preaddressed postage paid envelope. If you have a problem reading the questionnaire you may have someone read it to you. Thank you very much for your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely,

John Humphrey
Instructor

Asheville Buncombe
Technical Community
College

I give John Humphrey permission to use the results of my questionnaire in his research.

_____ _____

NAME DATE

Appendix B

Educational Participation Scale

Demographic Questionnaire

1. AGE _____

2. RACE
WHITE_____
BLACK_____
ASIAN_____
HISPANIC___
OTHER_____

3. GENDER MALE____ FEMALE____

4. TYPE OF DISABILITY
LEARNING DISABILITY _____
SPEECH OR LANGUAGE IMPAIRMENTS _____
HEARING IMPAIRMENTS _____
VISUAL IMPAIRMENTS _____
ORTHOPEDIC IMPAIRMENTS _____
OTHER _____
MULTIPLE DISABILITIES _____

5.MARITAL STATUS MARRIED__ SINGLE__ DIVORCED__

6.DO YOU CURRENTLY WORK? FULL TIME__ PART TIME__ NO__

7. HOURS WORKED PER WEEK 40+___30-40___20-29___
10-19___0-9___

8. ARE THERE CHILDREN IN THE HOME YES___ NO___

9. MY EDUCATIONAL GOAL WHEN I ENTERED COLLEGE

2-YEAR DEGREE____ TRANSFER TO 4-YEAR COLLEGE____

CERTIFICATE____ UPGRADE JOB SKILLS_____

JUST TAKE A FEW CLASSES____ Other_____

Number_____

TO WHAT EXTENT DID THESE REASONS INFLUENCE YOU TO ATTEND A COMMUNITY COLLEGE?

Think back to when you decided to attend your community college and indicate the extent to which each of the reasons listed below influenced you to participate. *Circle* the category which best reflects the extent to which each reason influenced you to attend. Circle *one* category for each reason. Be *frank*. There are *no* right or wrong answers.

1. To improve language skills	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
2. To become acquainted with friendly people	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
3. To make up for a narrow previous education	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
4. To secure professional advancement	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
5. To get ready for changes in my family	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
6. To overcome the frustration of day to day	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
7. To get something meaningful out of life	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
8. To speak better	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
9. To have a good time with friends	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
10. To get education I missed earlier in life	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
11. To achieve an occupational goal	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
12. To share a common interest with spouse or friend	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
13. To get away from loneliness	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
14. To acquire more general knowledge	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
15. To learn another language	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence

16. To meet different people	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
17. To acquire knowledge to help with other educational courses	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
18. To prepare for getting a job	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
19. To keep with others in my family	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
20. To get relief from boredom	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
21. To learn just for the joy of learning	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
22. To write better	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
23. To make friends	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
24. To prepare for further education	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
25. To give me higher status in my job	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
26. To keep up with my children	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
27. To get a break in the routine of home or work	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
28. To satisfy an inquiring mind	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
29. To help me understand what people are saying and writing	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
30. To make new friends	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
31. To do courses needed for another school or college	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
32. To get a better job	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
33. To answer questions asked by my children	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
34. To do something rather than nothing	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence

35. To seek knowledge for its own sake	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
36. To learn about the usual customs here	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
37. To meet new people	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
38. To get entrance to another school or college	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
39. To increase my job competence	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
40. To help me talk with my children	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
41. To escape an unhappy relationship	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence
42. To expand my mind	No Influence	Little Influence	Moderate Influence	Much Influence

VITA

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