

A Follow-up Study of Graduates
of a High School
Adult Business Education Program
1987-1989

by

Dawn L. Hicks

A thesis presented to the
Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Manitoba
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Master of Education
in
Curriculum: Maths and Natural Sciences

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Abstract

This follow-up study surveyed graduates of an adult high school business education program within a school division in Winnipeg, Manitoba between the years 1987 and 1989. The purpose of this study was to add to existing knowledge concerning reasons for participation, participation barriers, and satisfaction concerning the appropriateness of the training.

One hundred forty-four surveys were distributed with a cover letter and self-addressed, stamped envelope. Three follow-ups, by telephone, were made to those who were slow replying. Seventy-two graduates responded, 61 graduates could not be located.

The majority of graduates were women who wanted to update or develop new skills in order to obtain immediate employment. Over 76 percent of respondents reported multiple reasons for attending the program. Approximately 42 percent reported obtaining a mature high school diploma as one of the reasons for attending the program.

The availability of training at no charge was identified as an important factor in choosing to attend a high school. Convenient location and hours were also noted.

Approximately 39 percent of graduates experienced barriers before entering or during the program. Most

barriers were situational or attitudinal/dispositional. Financial concerns, home responsibilities, and lack of confidence were frequently reported problems. Flexibility, determination, and support from others were identified as important to overcome barriers.

The majority of the graduates obtained employment within the first year of completing the program and were satisfied with the training they received.

The direct application of skills and knowledge from the program to work appeared to be an important factor in determining the usefulness of a course. An evaluation of the program revealed two aspects received a lower rating: equipment and vocational counselling.

By combining various demographic characteristics of the graduates with their reported barriers it was determined that a high percentage of graduates:

- (1) over 45 years of age,
 - (2) with previous education below high school graduation,
 - (3) with previous education between 6 to 10 years and over 16 years prior to entering the program, or
 - (4) who were separated/divorced with children
- reported barriers.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

For many years public schools have undertaken the secondary responsibility of providing learning activities for adults. Usually these activities, both credit and non-credit opportunities, have taken place during evening school programs (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982; Moore & Waldron, 1981). However, over the past several years various articles have reported a growth in adult day programming at the secondary school level.

In Canada and the United States, innovative programming has been developing to respond to the needs of local residents of some communities.

Adult high school programs exist because many adults need and desire the skills and knowledge that an effective high school experience imparts. ... Today, these skills are a prerequisite for many training and employment opportunities (Delker, 1985, p. 151).

One of the major influences on this type of educational programming is the accelerating pace of technological change. Adults require retraining and updating for new careers and technological advancements (Behymer & Schafer, 1990; Calver, 1989; Galbraith, 1984). Jobs require more sophisticated skills and higher levels of educational attainment than many adults possess (Industry, Science and Technology [IST], 1989). Thirty percent of Canadian high

school students drop out before completing Grade 12 (IST, 1989) and there are millions of adults with less than Grade 9 education (Rachlis, 1983).

Social change such as the decline of traditional roles places new demands on the education system to provide career training for re-entry women (Cross, 1981). Demographic changes have also influenced this type of programming. Schools faced with the declining enrollment of 'traditional' age students have opened their doors to adults--offering them quality staff and facilities in a convenient setting (Calver, 1989).

Many adults are interested in updating or learning new skills for business and office occupations. Business education has taken an active role in providing adult educational opportunities for many years (Behymer & Schafer, 1990; Galbraith, 1984; Policies Commission for Business and Economic Education [PCBEE], 1980); however, secondary school business departments are just beginning to respond to the lifelong educational needs of adults.

This exploratory study examines graduates of Adult High School Business Education programs; their characteristics, activities and opinions. Data collected from the graduates are used to examine demographic variables, reasons for participation, participation barriers, satisfaction levels, and their reflection concerning the appropriateness of the training they received.

More specifically, this descriptive study is designed to answer the following questions:

1. What was the age level, marital status, and dependent status of the respondents before entering the program(s)?
2. What educational background and work experience did the respondents have before entering the program(s)?
3. What factor(s) led them to decide to enrol in the program(s)?
4. What factor(s) led them to decide to enrol in a secondary school?
5. How long did it take them to complete their program(s)?
6. Did the participants experience any problems or barriers before entering or during the program(s)? and how did they deal with them?
7. During the first year after completing the program(s) what activities were the graduates involved in?
8. What courses from the program(s) did they find most and least useful in their new activities?
9. What was their level of satisfaction with various aspects of the program?
10. What comments, remarks, or suggestions do they have concerning adult business programs?

Significance of the Study

According to Shulman (1985), adults are becoming the most important student population. Programs sponsored by traditional and non-traditional providers of adult education will need to expand as the demand for learning opportunities increases. Cross (1981) considers multiple providers a "proper goal of the learning society, and all citizens should be guaranteed access to the learning opportunities most relevant to their needs at any stage in life" (p. 49).

The role of the high school as an adult education provider is expected to continue to grow. Research concerning the development of business education programs for women re-entering the workforce, persons requiring retraining and updating for business occupations, and persons requiring keyboarding skills are cited as issues requiring special attention by Lambrecht, D'Onofrio, Jones, and Merrier (1981).

Several authors (Borg & Gall, 1989; Hillestad, 1977; Issac & Michael, 1981) consider research an important component for development and improvement of educational practice. Research may aid decision making (Gay, 1981), guide program planning (Wentling, 1980), or indicate effectiveness or desirability of a program (Best & Khan, 1986).

Determining why adults participate in a particular program is of significant research importance. A large

majority of adults participants are voluntary learners. Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) view research concerning the participation of adults in educational programs as essential for designing effective policies and programs that will ensure equality of opportunity. Watt and Boss (1987) suggest barriers to participation are also of research importance:

By obtaining sociodemographic profiles on particular groups of adult learners in specific learning situations, it may be possible to identify barriers important for these and similar groups. With this information, the researcher can assist the classroom teacher and the administrator to identify barriers which are within control of the programs' planners and to thus identify problems which may be corrected (p. 121).

One of the major goals of Business education programs is to prepare students for immediate employment. Many adults who choose to retrain or update their skills wish to obtain suitable employment as quickly as possible upon completion of the program (Roderick, 1987). The relationship between training and employment is extremely important. According to Hegman and Chaney (1986), "[i]n the final analysis, the success of a program is measured by the success of those who graduate from it" (p. 6). Campbell (1987) suggests the experiences of graduates in the workforce are excellent indicators of the appropriateness of training they have received. Graduates may also provide valuable information to update curriculum for relevance (Fry, 1983; Hegman & Chaney, 1986; Lea, 1979), indicate new

trends (Pound, 1981), evaluate the success of a program (Lea, 1979; Pound, 1981), and provide a strong basis of support (Fry, 1983).

Despite the growth in Adult Business Education day programs within the secondary schools of Canada and the United States, a review of current literature identified few follow-up research studies conducted in order to examine the status of these graduates and their opinions concerning training. Descriptive research, using a follow-up approach, can be conducted for the purpose of examining their status and seeking their opinions concerning the adequacy of this type of training.

The results of this study, using the follow-up approach, will add to existing knowledge concerning adult high school programs and may benefit other secondary schools in program planning as they expand services to include adult participants in the future. The results may also provide inferences of general value to individuals in the field of Adult Business Education or others considering research in this field.

Limitations

There are three limitations of this study in terms of contributions it may make to understanding adult participation in High School Business programs.

First, a relatively small sample of graduates only was used in this study. Participants who did not complete the

graduation requirements were not contacted. More data concerning participation barriers may have revealed by including all participants rather than just graduates. Data to be studied were collected from a sample of 144 graduates of St. James-Assiniboia School Division Adult High School Programs from 1987 to 1989 in Winnipeg, Manitoba. Sixty-one graduates could not be located due to:

- (1) moved, address unknown
- (2) incorrect address in records
- (3) unknown at telephone number supplied, or
- (4) telephone no longer in service.

There may be factors unique to these graduates; thus, limiting the generalizability of this study.

Second, data was collected using two methods. The first distribution of the survey was made by mail and follow-up activities were conducted using the telephone. The first follow-up was a reminder to return the survey, while the remaining follow-ups involved obtaining data over the telephone. Respondents contacted by telephone for data may not have had sufficient time to reflect on their responses to open-ended questions.

Third, the study represents a cross sectional approach for the collection of data. Graduates were requested to recall certain aspects of participation at one point in time, the point at which they completed the survey. A

longitudinal approach would allow for collection over a period of time and could result in different data.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they apply to this research study:

Adult student: any person 18 years of age or older

Adult education:

a process whereby persons whose major social roles are characteristic of adult status undertake systematic and sustained learning activities for the purpose of bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, or skills (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982, p. 9).

Adult business certificate program: a two-semester, eight-credit secondary school program available free to adult residents of St. James-Assiniboia School Division, Winnipeg, MB

Enriched business certificate program: a one-semester, four-credit program beyond the adult business certificate available free to adult residents of St. James-Assiniboia School Division, Winnipeg, MB

Mature graduation diploma: a high school diploma presented to adult students who complete 4 senior level credit courses as part of their business program if they have not previously graduated from high school

Business education: a vocational and general education program educating students for entry into and advancement in business occupations and for preparation as effective consumers in handling personal business affairs

Credit: the value assigned to a student record for completing a 110-hour course of study

Secondary school/high school: the highest level of public school, usually including Grades 10 to 12

Semester: a five-month period of time beginning in September and ending in January or beginning in February and ending in June.

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Literature from periodicals, books, government publications, theses and dissertations were reviewed on the topics of (1) adult participation in education, (2) secondary school adult programs, (3) adult business education programs and their participants, (3) the importance of follow-up information, (4) related studies (business education and adult programs) and (5) survey methods and procedures.

Adult Participation in Education

For many years adults have been active participants in educational activities. Adults of varying age, gender, race, schooling, and income characteristics participate for a wide variety of reasons.

In previous research, adults have identified reasons for participating in educational activities that may be described as: knowledge, personal, community, religious, social, and escape goals; obligation or personal fulfillment; cultural knowledge; and/or other reasons. Of those reasons, knowledge, personal, and social goals, as well as personal fulfillment were cited more frequently.

Knowledge goals include becoming better informed or to satisfy curiosity; personal goals include getting a new job,

getting a certificate or license, or attaining a degree; social goals include meeting new people or feeling a sense of belonging; personal fulfillment includes being a better parent or spouse or becoming a happier person (Cross, 1981; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982).

Charner and Fraser (1986) suggest three basic categories of reasons adults participate in education: job or career, personal or social, and for general education (p. 55). Cross (1981) suggests "(m)otives differ for different groups of learners, at different stages of life, and most individuals have not one but multiple reasons for learning" (p. 97). Watt and Boss (1987), in an Ontario study of one hundred and forty adults updating or completing high school skills or requirements, found all respondents reported more than one reason for returning to school:

when asked their most important reason for learning, 68% specified a goal orientation, 30% a learning orientation, and 2% a social orientation. These reasons were not related to demographic variables (p. 117).

Adults participate in a wide variety of activities. According to Moore and Waldron (1981) adults want learning activities that are "highly practical, highly applicable, very meaningful, and related to their personal and professional growth and development" (p. 35). The type of programming most popular, of all adult education activities, is work-related or vocationally-oriented training (Canadian Association of Adult Education [CAAE], 1982; Cross, 1981;

Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982; Devereaux, 1983; Shulman, 1985); general and academic education ranks second (Cross, 1981; Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982).

Although many adults participate in educational activities, some do not due to various barriers (Cross, 1981; Watt & Boss, 1987). Previous research had isolated four types of barriers:

An informational barrier implies a lack of awareness of the available educational resources. Situational barriers are obstacles related to one's general life situation: health, finances, family, or work responsibilities. Institutional barriers are the social, economic, and cultural characteristics which deter institutions from adapting to the needs of learners such as restrictive admission practices, inconvenient locations and class schedules, deficiencies in curriculum planning, or nonsupportive faculty attitudes. Attitudinal barriers are the beliefs and values that inhibit participation in formal learning experiences; these may stem from the individual's self-concept in general or from attitude toward education (Watt & Boss, 1987, p. 114).

Even participators may have experienced these barriers at some time. A synthesis of research by Cross (1981) identified various reasons in each barrier category. Some of the situational barriers include: cost, not enough time, home responsibilities, no child care, and friends or family don't like the idea. Some of the dispositional barriers were: afraid that they are too old to learn, not confident of their abilities, not enough energy or stamina, and don't enjoy studying. Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) point out that issues concerning participation, for example, who

participates, what they learn, their reasons and barriers to participation, are of considerable research importance.

The Ontario study of the adults updating their basic academic and business skills or completing a high school diploma reported past and present barriers before entering and during the program (Watt & Boss, 1987). The most frequently reported barrier was an uncertainty concerning their ability to handle the program successfully. Other barriers reported included: lack of support from family and friends, a dislike of teachers and classroom practices, and lack of self-confidence. Watt and Boss (1987) suggest that research to obtain sociodemographic profiles of particular groups in specific learning situations may help administrators and instructors plan programs that may lessen barriers (p. 121).

Secondary School Adult Programs

In recent years adult secondary school programs have developed because many need or desire the type of skills and knowledge provided at that level. According to Delker (1985), these skills and knowledge were not as important in the past, but are requirements for jobs and training now. Manuel (1985) suggests the 'school-of-second-chance' phenomena may continue to grow because of life-long learning demands, high unemployment and decreasing school enrollment.

The daytime use of secondary schools by adults is increasing and there are various reasons why. Anschuetz

(1982) identified some of the reasons from a pilot counselling service at Ontario's Huron Heights Secondary School during the early 1980's. Participants reasons for attending a secondary school included: to save money, satisfy social needs, meet educational requirements, achieve status or recognition, provide variety or change, learn a new skill or update an old one. Information from Toronto secondary schools identified cost, as well as, a comfortable setting, a method of testing abilities or to obtain a diploma (Magder, 1987).

One of Canada's first secondary schools to open their doors to adults was Toronto's Bathurst Heights Secondary School. Rachlis (1981) provides several observations based on their experiences with adults: they must feel welcome and their first experiences should be positive, some will fear teenagers, many need help to revive study skills. Their families must be supportive of their decision to return to school, they need to feel they belong, and the experience must be practical since many return to school for specific job or career goals.

Adult Business Education Programs

Business Education has provided educational opportunities for adults for many years (Ackley, 1980; Behymer & Schafer, 1990; Galbraith, 1984; PCBEE, 1980). According to Fisher (1987), high school business programs offer a wide variety of skills that enable graduates to

obtain immediate employment upon completion of the program. Since many adults seek vocationally-oriented training, some secondary school Business Education day programs have been developed for, or expanded to include the adult learner.

A large portion of the participants are women who wish to 're-enter' the labour market but lack the necessary skills or need to brush-up old skills to obtain a job. Many have been raising children, others have had changes in their personal lives (ie. divorce, widowhood), some are just bored (Roderick, 1987; Schmidtke, 1987). Most want to learn as much as possible, as quickly as possible, to obtain suitable employment. Many participants want to obtain employment in modern, automated offices and require skills relevant to these jobs (Roderick, 1987).

Adults who do participate in secondary school Business Education day programs vary in age, educational background and life experiences. Research and observations of instructors of adult programs indicate that adults respond favourably to a warm, supportive learning environment (Knox, 1981; Thiel, 1985; Ustanko, 1984) offering a curricula relevant to their needs (Ackley, 1980; Roderick, 1987; Theil, 1985). A friendly, open learning environment is considered important for building self-confidence (Knox, 1981). Instructors should be knowledgeable and relate effectively to the adult learner (Ustanko, 1984), creating a learning environment that is not threatening or condescending

(Ackley, 1980; Knox, 1981; Rachlis, 1981). The availability of individual counselling is considered an important consideration (Theil, 1985).

Importance of Follow-up Information

Using the follow-up approach to obtain descriptive information concerning the participants of a program may provide new and valuable information to the current body of knowledge concerning adult education at the high school level. This new information may be useful to other researchers or to practitioners in the field.

For vocational programs, such as Business Education, the relationship between training and employment is extremely important. Graduates can provide valuable information concerning their success in the workplace and usefulness of the courses they completed during their studies (Hegman & Chaney, 1986).

Fry (1983) considers follow-up data to be a neglected "source of valuable information for program planning and evaluation" (p. 99). She suggests follow-up data may provide useful information for four key areas: "equipment update, curriculum revision, employment stability, and ongoing training needs" (p. 102).

Lea (1979) identifies graduate feedback as an important component for identifying program success areas and areas in need of improvement. Scott and Chapman (1981) consider follow-up data necessary for curriculum review and revision.

Related Studies

Several studies dealing with high school business program participants were examined.

Wilson (1989) followed up 1986 to 1988 graduating seniors of Business and Office Education programs at Garinger High School in Charlotte, North Carolina. The findings of the study were used to determine whether the graduates would be employed in business related jobs or continuing their education, the benefits of the program for college and non-college bound students, and the impact of the program on the community and unemployment. A one-page survey instrument was used to obtain the data.

Sandall (1987) used a five-page mailed survey to follow-up 1983 and 1984 graduates of Kent School District Business and Office Education programs. The findings of this study provided information for accountability and evaluation purposes. Little previous data was available concerning graduates post-training activities and opinions concerning their training. Graduates were surveyed to determine their current activities, obtain their perceptions concerning training, and identify equipment and skills currently used.

McDaniel (1986) obtained follow-up data of 1980 to 1982 Office and Marketing graduates of Muskegon Heights High School, Muskegon Heights, Michigan, for the purpose of evaluating the program and providing information for staff

members concerning graduates' preparedness for employment and types of post-training activities. A five-page mailed survey was used to collect the data.

A portion of Neill's (1984) study concerned contacting 1977 to 1981 graduates of Greeneville High School, Greeneville, Tennessee, to determine their perception of Business Education training at the high school. The purpose of this study was to provide evaluative data for administrators. A four-page survey instrument was developed to collect the data from graduates.

Follow-up studies of college and university Business programs were also reviewed.

Hegman and Chaney (1986) contacted 1976 to 1985 graduates of an Office Administration program at Memphis State University to determine their success and obtain their opinions regarding their training. A two-page survey instrument was prepared and mailed to graduates. Their follow-up activities included a second letter and telephone calls to non-respondents. Findings provided details concerning the activities and accomplishments of graduates, as well as useful information for the evaluation of the program.

Himelstein (1984) surveyed 1977 to 1981 graduates of Essex County College Business programs in Newark, New Jersey in order to provide data for program evaluation and to add to the existing body of research concerning college and

university Business programs. Himelstein developed a survey, reviewed by a panel of experts and pilot tested to collect the data. Follow-up activities included a second mailing of the survey and telephone contacts.

Several studies reviewed involved the follow-up of adult education program participants.

Mitchell (1981) conducted a follow-up of graduates of an adult high school program of St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands for the purpose of exploring associations of student characteristics and measures of career success. Analysis of the data indicated the program had little impact on their success.

Giles (1985) conducted a follow-up study of participants of a Horticultural extension program at the University of Alberta for the purpose of evaluation. Students opinions were collected through mailed surveys and telephone interviews. The study was designed to provide additional information concerning the adult learner and add to existing knowledge of adult education.

Survey Methods and Procedures

Descriptive data may be obtained through a variety of methods. Two methods frequently used are personal interviews and mailed surveys (Gay, 1981).

Gay (1981) points out that the interview method allows a flexible, adaptive atmosphere that may result in more accurate, honest answers and unclear responses can be probed

by the interviewer. However, this method may be affected by interviewer bias and is time consuming and expensive as a collection method (p. 166).

When compared to the interview method, the mailed survey requires less time and expense, and allows collection from a larger sample (Bailey, 1987; Gay, 1981; Hillestad, 1977). Hillestad (1977) suggests the mailed survey allows more candid and objective replies. According to Bailey (1987) and Hillestad (1977) the threat of interviewer bias is decreased since all respondents receive the same questions in the same manner. A mailed survey allows the respondent more time to consider answers that they may complete at their convenience (Bailey, 1987; Hillestad, 1977; Issac & Michael, 1981).

Bailey (1987) identifies a serious disadvantage of the mailed survey, a low response rate that may lead to biased results. However, various suggestions are provided by methodology textbooks to increase the response rate of the mailed survey.

According to Hillestad (1977) various factors affect response rates. The development of a good survey instrument is suggested as one method of improving results. Questions should have clear, complete directions; grouped in a logical sequence; easy to answer; and all related to the purpose of the study. The instrument should have an attractive

appearance: well arranged, plenty of 'white space' and as short as possible.

Gay (1981) also suggests the use of an easy to answer format, as well as, providing distinctly different choices for responses. Each question should be precisely worded, related to a single concept, including clear directions on where to record the answer. The underlining of key phrases and words is suggested to clarify the meaning of questions.

Borg and Gall (1989) suggest using closed-form questions so that analysis can be completed efficiently. Each item should relate to a specific objective of the study, worded in language the respondent will understand. They suggest using bold print for the brief, clear instructions.

According to Bailey (1987), the closed-form response format is easy to code and analyze, saves time and money, and may provide clarification of question meaning. Although respondents often find them easier to answer, Bailey cautions the use of closed-form questions. Respondents may become frustrated if the appropriate response is not listed and there is no opportunity to clarify answers. Gay (1981) suggests using an 'other' category for unexpected responses.

Best and Khan (1986) suggest reviewing instruments from previous studies before developing questions for the survey. The use of underscoring of key words or phrases for special

emphasis and clarification with the survey instrument is also suggested.

Hillestad (1977) and Best and Khan (1986) suggest composing a well-written cover letter to accompany the survey. Bailey (1987) considers the introductory statement of the cover letter to be the deciding factor for whether respondents will be cooperative. According to Bailey, there are five important items to include in a cover letter:

1. Identification of the individual conducting the study.
2. The importance of the study.
3. The importance of responding.
4. The assurance of no right or wrong answers.
5. The assurance of confidentiality (p. 137).

Bailey also suggests mentioning in the cover letter that the survey will not take long to complete.

Bailey (1987) points out that while it is wise to offer anonymity, it makes follow-up activities more difficult to complete. Studies may offer respondents a promise of confidentiality and use a numbered survey system to aid follow-up activities. Only the numbers not yet returned would be contacted. The survey, "with no name, but a number might make the respondent assume identification will be impossible" (p. 168).

Gay (1981) suggests that the cover letter be individually signed, with a specific deadline date stated, and each letter addressed to a specific respondent.

Lea (1979) and McKinney and Oglesby (1971) suggest contacting graduates who have completed the program for over a year. These graduates have had a chance to reflect on the relevance of their training and may contribute more meaningful comments. Time spans of no more than five years have been suggested since separating training from other experiences becomes more difficult as time passes. Borg and Gall (1989) suggest that respondents may not recall information accurately if it is too far in the past.

Pretesting was identified in all methodology textbooks reviewed as an important step in preparing a survey instrument. Best and Khan (1986) suggest submitting the developed instrument to faculty or fellow class members for critical analysis, then pilot testing with a group similar to those in the study. According to Bailey (1987), the pretest group should be instructed to critically analyze the survey instrument for ambiguity, clarity, and parsimony. Issac and Michael (1981) suggest checking the response rates and examining the question responses of the pilot study. Problem areas should be revised before producing the final copy of the survey instrument.

According to Best and Khan (1986), the revised, final copy of the survey instrument should be attractive, neatly organized and clearly reproduced. Several survey studies reviewed used light-coloured, 11" by 17" paper (Hegman & Chaney, 1986; Lea, 1979). Hillestad (1977) suggests leaving

as much 'white space' as possible, with precoded, closed-responses lined up at the right to aid in data analysis.

Bailey (1987) and Gay (1981) suggest including a stamped, addressed, return envelope with the cover letter and survey. Bailey's synthesis of research on factors affecting mailed survey response rates indicates that virtually all surveys provide a return envelope as it makes it easier for the respondent to reply.

Best and Kahn (1986) and Bailey (1987) suggest offering an inducement or reward such as money, miniature pencils, or prize draws for completing the survey. The reward, included with the first mailing of the cover letter and survey, is considered an indication of trust on the part of the researcher.

Several follow-ups are suggested in various methodology textbooks as an effective method for improving the response rate of the mailed survey. Both Bailey (1987) and Best and Kahn (1986) outline similar follow-up routines for pursuing non-respondents: one to three weeks following the mailing of the first cover letter and survey instrument a courteous reminder postcard is suggested. A week or so later a second follow-up, in the form of a personal letter with another copy of the survey, should be mailed to the non-respondents. A telephone call is suggested for the third follow-up procedure.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

Sample

The graduates of Adult Business and Enriched Certificate programs within the St. James-Assiniboia School Division from 1987 to 1989 were the population of interest for this study. After obtaining approval from the Superintendent of Secondary Schools (Appendix A), the total population was determined by reviewing all schools' records for the compilation of names and addresses of graduates. One hundred and forty-four graduates were identified. All 144 graduates were contacted to collect the data.

Instruments

Preparation of Data Gathering Instrument

A review of related literature did not indicate the existence of a data gathering instrument already developed to collect the specific information outlined for this study. However, various follow-up studies were reviewed for similar questions and methodology textbooks also provided guidelines for the development of the survey instrument (Appendix C).

Questions included in the survey were based on the research questions stated in the Introduction section of the Proposal. Response categories were developed using (1) previous research, (2) methodology textbook guidelines, and (3) program promotional materials as a guide.

The survey instrument consists of three sections. The first section, General, includes questions such as: gender, age, previous work and educational experience, activities, and personal status and situation, prior to enrollment. The second section, Program Participation Information, asks for reasons for enrolling in the program(s), reasons for choosing a secondary school, type of program and length of time to complete, barriers or problems experienced prior to or during the program and how they overcame them.

The third section, Post-training Activities and Program Evaluation, asks for graduates activities during the first year after completing the program, which courses they feel have been most/least useful, a rating of various aspects of the program(s), and their additional comments, remarks, or suggestions.

Most survey questions were closed-response, providing an 'other' category for respondents. These questions were pre-coded to aid analysis of data.

Validity and Reliability Measures

Suggestions outlined in methodology textbooks (Bailey, 1987; Best & Kahn, 1986; Borg & Gall, 1989; Gay, 1981) for improving validity and reliability of survey instruments were followed.

Concurrent validation of the survey instrument was attempted through a comparison analysis of previously

developed survey instruments for follow-up studies. Items were compared to determine similarity and appropriateness.

A panel of experts were requested to critically examine the survey to judge the content validity of the instrument. A second draft was developed, after considering the comments and suggestions of the review experts, and was administered to a class of adults in their final semester of an adult business education program. The students were instructed, by letter, to complete the survey and return it within a specific period of time. They were told they were participating in a research study. They were requested to critically analyze all aspects of the survey, add comments concerning any problems they encountered, and record the amount of time required to complete the survey. Results of the pretest were reviewed for percentage replies, comments, items left blank, and analysis of data.

Research Design and Procedures

Research Design

A descriptive-survey design was used, including qualitative and statistical analysis of the data.

Administration of Survey

Each subject was assigned a distinct number that was printed on their survey copy to aid follow-up activities. The survey instrument was mailed to the subjects along with a cover letter, a stamped, self-addressed return envelope, and a pen as an incentive. The cover letter explained (1)

who was conducting the study, (2) why it is important, (3) why it is important they respond, and (4) that their responses will be strictly confidential. A suggested return date was included in the letter (Appendix B).

Three weeks after the first mailing a follow-up telephone call was made to non-respondents reminding them to complete the survey at their earliest possible convenience. Three weeks following the first reminder a second follow-up was made, again by telephone, to the remaining non-respondents. Respondents were asked during the first and second follow-up if a new copy was required in order to complete the survey, if so, a new copy was sent to them. Three weeks following the second follow-up non-respondents were contacted by telephone to obtain the information requested in the survey.

Analysis of Data

Closed-form data from the completed surveys were analysed for frequencies and cross-tabulations. Open-ended questions were grouped, tabulated, and summarized where possible. Entire responses to open-response questions are presented in the appendices.

Various demographic characteristics were combined with responses concerning participation, barriers, and program rating to determine possible connections between responses.

CHAPTER 4

Results

As discussed in Chapter 1, the purpose of this descriptive study was to examine Adult High School Business Education program graduates characteristics, activities and opinions in order to add to existing adult education knowledge concerning participation, barriers to participation, satisfaction with and appropriateness of training in Adult High School Business Education programs. The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the data collected from the survey responses.

Response to Survey

For the years studied, 144 adults graduated from the program. All graduates were initially contacted by mail, followed by telephone follow-ups to non-respondents. It was possible to contact 83 of them, of which 87% responded to the survey. Response rates for the first mailing of the survey and follow-up activities are presented in Table 1.

Table 1
Response Rates for First Mailing and Follow-up Activities
(n=83)

<u>Type of Contact</u>	<u>Number of Responses</u>	<u>Response Rate</u>
Initial mailing of survey	58	70%
First follow-up telephone call	4	5
Second follow-up telephone call	3	4
Third follow-up telephone call	7	8
Total	72	87%

Survey Analysis

The data were analysed in four parts: the first three parts correspond to the three sections of the survey. The fourth part combines data from the first three sections in order to explore possible connections between responses.

Description of Respondents

The first section of the survey was concerned with general characteristics of the respondents prior to enrollment.

Age and Gender. Respondents were requested in Question 1 to indicate whether they were females or males. The majority of the respondents were female (98.6%). In Question 2 respondents were asked to respond to the question "What was your age at the time you first entered the

program?" Twenty-five percent of the respondents were under 25 years of age at the time they first entered the program. Slightly over 20 percent were between the age of 40 to 44, 16.7 percent were 35 to 39, and 12.5 were 25 to 29. Almost 10 percent were 45 to 49, 6.9 percent were 30 to 34, 5.6 percent were 50 to 54, and 2.8 percent were 55 and over. Table 2 presents a summary of the program entry age and gender of respondents.

Table 2

Program Entry Age and Gender of Respondents
(n=72)

<u>Age</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Under 25	18		18	25
25 - 29	8	1	9	12.5
30 - 34	5		5	6.9
35 - 39	12		12	16.7
40 - 44	15		15	20.8
45 - 49	7		7	9.7
50 - 54	4		4	5.6
55 and over	2		2	2.8
Total	71	1	72	100

Previous Level of Education. Respondents were requested in Question 3 to indicate their highest level of education prior to entering the adult business program. Table 3 summarizes the previous education level of the respondents. A small percentage of the respondents, 4.2 percent, had partially completed or completed only Junior High school. Approximately sixty-five percent of the respondents had partially completed or completed High School; while 30.6 percent reported higher levels of education attempted or completed. Respondents with less than High School graduation represented 38.9 percent of the total respondents.

Previous Program of Studies. Respondents were requested in Question 3, Part B to indicate the nature of their previous program of studies. Approximately fifty-five percent of the respondents identified previous educational programs not related to business. These programs included high school Academic or Modified programs; university Arts, Science, Music, Teaching and Dental Assisting; and hospital Nursing programs.

Twenty-five percent of the respondents had partially completed or completed business related programs at the high school, community/private business college or university level. Of the twenty-five percent only 12.5 percent had previously completed a business program. These programs included high school business and combined

Table 3

Previous Level of Education before Entering the Adult
Business Program
(n=72)

<u>Level of Education</u>	<u>Partially Completed</u>		<u>Completed</u>		<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent- age</u>
	f	%	f	%		
Junior High	1	1.4	2	2.8	3	4.2
High School:						
Grade 10	4	5.6	3	4.2	7	9.7
Grade 11	7	9.7	4	5.6	11	15.3
Grade 12	5	6.9	24	33.4	29	40.3
Community College/ Private Business College	5	6.9	6	8.3	11	15.3
University	8	11.1	2	2.8	10	13.9
Other:						
Hospital Program			1	1.4	1	1.4
Total	30		42		72	100

academic/business; community/private business college secretarial, general business, bookkeeping and medical receptionist; and university commerce programs. Table 4 provides a summary of all identified previous educational program names.

Approximately 18 percent did not provide the name of the program they completed.

Table 4

Name of Previous Program of Studies before Entering the
Adult Business Program
(n=72)

<u>Name of Educational Program</u>	<u>Partially Completed</u>	<u>Completed</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Junior High:	1	2	3	4.2
High School:				
<u>Grade 10</u>				
Academic		3	3	4.2
Business	1		1	1.4
Acad/Bus.	1		1	1.4
Not given	2		2	2.8
<u>Grade 11</u>				
Academic	4	1	5	6.9
Business	1	2	3	4.2
Not given	2	1	3	4.2
<u>Grade 12</u>				
Academic	2	18	20	27.7
Business	1	1	2	2.8
Acad/Bus.	1	2	3	4.2
"04"	1		1	1.4
Not given		3	3	4.2
Community/Private Business College:				
Secretarial	1	3	4	5.6
Business - General		1	1	1.4
Bookkeeping/Machines	1		1	1.4
Medical Receptionist	1		1	1.4
Not given	2	2	4	5.6
University:				
Arts	4		4	5.6
Science	1		1	1.4
Commerce	1		1	1.4
Music	1		1	1.4
Teaching	1		1	1.4
Dental assisting		1	1	1.4
Not given		1	1	1.4
Hospital:				
Nursing		1	1	1.4
Total	30	42	72	100

Length of Time Since Previous Education. Respondents were requested in Question 3, Part C to indicate the length of time since the last level of training completed before entering the adult high school business program. Over 23 percent of the respondents reported 16 to 20 years since their last level of training. Almost 21 percent reported 1 to 2 years. Respondents reported between 3 to 5 years and 11 to 15 years at a rate of 11.1 percent each. Slightly over 8 percent noted 6 to 10 years, while 1.4 percent reported between 21 and 25 years. Three respondents did not provide a time period. Table 5 presents a frequency and percentage chart of the survey responses.

Previous Work Experience. Respondents were asked in Question 4 if they had any prior work experience. The majority of the respondents, 91.7 percent, had some type of work experience prior to entering the adult business program. Almost seven percent reported no previous work experience. Frequencies and percentages of responses are presented in Table 6.

Respondents with previous work experience were requested to list job titles or a description of the activities they carried out, starting with their most recent experiences. Of those respondents with previous work experience, approximately 68 percent had experience in activities usually associated with business skills and

Table 5

Length of Time since Previous Level of Education and
Entering the Adult Business Program
(n=72)

<u>Number of Years</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
1 - 2	15	20.8
3 - 5	8	11.1
6 - 10	6	8.3
11 - 15	8	11.1
16 - 20	17	23.6
21 - 25	1	1.4
over 25	14	19.4
Not given	3	4.2
Total	72	100

knowledge: secretarial (19.6%), computer (1.5%), clerical (30.3%), sales (12.1%), advertising (4.5%), and management (9.1%) activities. Approximately 4.5 percent had worked in the restaurant/hospitality field, 9 percent were involved in education or health care. Slightly over seven percent did not provide a job title or description. Table 7 presents a summary of the reported job titles or activities, their

frequencies with sub-totals and percentages for grouped categories.

Table 6

Work Experience Prior to Entering the Adult Business Program
(n=72)

<u>Previous Work Experience</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	66	91.7
No	5	6.9
No response	1	1.4
Total	72	100

Activities Prior to Entering Program. In Question 5 respondents were asked to respond to the question "What statement(s) would BEST describe your activities just before entering the adult business program?" Forty-three percent of the respondents reported they were employed, either full or part time, or self-employed just prior to entering the adult business program. Over 18 percent were unemployed or recently laid-off, 15.3 percent reported they had been engaged in responsibilities at home on a full time basis, 5.6 percent were attending an educational institution on a full or part time basis.

Table 7

Most recent Type of Work Experience Prior to Entering the
Adult Business Program
(n=66)

<u>Job Title/Activity</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Secretary:			
General	2		
Medical	1		
Executive	2		
Administrative	2	7	10.6
Computer Operator	1	1	1.5
Clerk:			
Office	7		
Store	11		
Bank	1		
Warehouse	1	20	30.3
Sales:			
Ticket Sales	2		
Telephone Sales	2		
Sales Representative	4	8	12.1
Advertising:			
Creative writer	1		
Layout artist	2	3	4.5
Management:			
Volunteer co-ordinator	2		
Assistant manager	1		
Manager	2		
Entrepreneur	1	6	9.1
Teacher	2	2	3.0
Child Care	1	1	1.5
Health/Dental Care:			
Registered nurse	1		
Nurses aide	3		
Dental assistant	1	5	7.6
Restaurant:			
Waitress	2		
Cook	1	3	4.5
Floral Designer	1	1	1.5
Hairdressing	1	1	1.5
Housekeeping	1	1	1.5
Bus Driver	1	1	1.5
Security person	1	1	1.5
No response	5	5	7.6
Total	66	66	100

Over 40 percent of the respondents reported multiple activities. Eighteen percent of the respondents had been involved in some form of volunteer work along with another activity. Table 8 presents the various reported activities with frequencies and percentages.

Marital and Dependent Status. Question 6 requested respondents to identify their marital and dependent status. Over 55 percent of the respondents were married at the time they entered the adult business program. Approximately 32 percent were single, 11 percent separated or divorced. The two largest groups of respondents were married, with children (40.2%) and single, with no dependents (25%). Table 9 provides a summary of the marital and dependent status of respondents with frequencies and percentages.

Table 8

Type of Activity Just Prior to Entering the Adult Business Program
(n=72)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Employed:		
full time	11	15.3
part time	8	11.1
part time/responsibilities at home	6	8.3
part time/responsibilities at home/volunteer work	5	6.9
Self-employed: manage own business/responsibilities at home	1	1.4
Volunteer work/responsibilities at home	9	12.5
Unemployed:		
with responsibilities at home	3	4.2
with illness or injury	3	4.2
with responsibilities at home/volunteer work	3	4.2
Recently laid-off/responsibilities at home	1	1.4
Attending educational institution:		
full time	3	4.2
part time/ responsibilities at home/volunteer work	1	1.4
Responsibilities at home	11	15.3
Just moved to province	1	1.4
No response	3	4.2
Total	72	100

Table 9

Marital and Dependent Status
(n=72)

<u>Dependent Status</u>	<u>Marital Status</u>								
	Single		Married		Separated/ Divorced		No Response		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
Dependents:									
Children	3	4.2	29	40.2	6	8.3			
Relatives	1	1.4							
Children/ Relatives			1	1.4					
Children/Spouse			2	2.8					
No Dependents	18	25.0	7	9.7	2	2.8			
No response	1	1.4	1	1.4			1	1.4	
Total (100)	23	31.9	40	55.6	8	11.1	1	1.4	

Program Participation and Participation Barriers

The second section of the survey was concerned with factors related to enrolling in the adult program, reasons for attending a high school for training, the time period for completing the training, and barriers experienced before or during the program.

Reasons for Enrolling in Program. Question 7 requested respondents to use a ranking system for reporting their

reason(s) for enrolling in an adult business program. Table 10 presents the first, second and third most important reasons identified by the respondents. One respondent did not complete the survey question and three respondents incorrectly marked responses so that their ranks could not be determined.

Of the 68 correctly marked surveys, 55.9 percent indicated their most important reason for enrolling was to develop new skills to obtain immediate employment. Slightly over 13 percent were interested in developing new skills for personal use, 10.3 percent wanted to obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction. Approximately 13 percent indicated a desire to upgrade previously learned skills in order to obtain immediate (10.3%) or future (2.9%) employment. Approximately 4 percent reported a need for a mature high school diploma in order to continue education. One respondent reported enrolling in the adult business program to prove to a family member that learning activities can be undertaken at any age.

Fifty-two of the 68 respondents (76.5%) identified a secondary reason for enrolling in the adult program. Over 24 percent indicated they wished to upgrade previously learned skills in order to obtain immediate (23%) or future (1.9%) employment. Slightly over 19 percent indicated developing new skills to obtain immediate employment,

Table 10

Reasons for Enrolling in the Adult Business Program

<u>Reason</u>	<u>First Response</u>		<u>Second Response</u>		<u>Third Response</u>	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Develop new skills to obtain immediate employment	38	55.9	10	19.2	4	16.7
Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment	8	11.8	12	23.1	3	12.5
Develop new skills to start my own business					1	4.2
Develop new skills for personal use	9	13.2	6	11.5	3	12.5
Upgrade previously learned skills for personal use			3	5.8	1	4.2
Obtain a Mature High School Diploma for personal satisfaction	7	10.3	10	19.2	6	25.0
Obtain a Mature High School Diploma required in order to continue education	3	4.4	3	5.8		
To meet new people			3	5.8	5	20.8
Prove to family member - never too old to learn	1	1.5				
Upgrade skills for future employment	2	2.9	1	1.9		
Obtain a Business Certificate			3	5.8		
High School required for better employment			1	1.9		
Personal therapy					1	4.2
Total	68	100	52	100	24	100

another 19 percent wanted to obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction. Approximately 11 percent wanted to develop new skills for personal use. One respondent indicated high school completion was a requirement for better employment.

Twenty-four of the 68 respondents (35.3%) who answered Question 7 identified a third reason for enrolling in the program. Twenty-five percent of those respondents noted obtaining a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction as a third most important reason. Slightly over 20 percent of respondents noted meeting new people. One respondent indicated enrollment for personal therapy.

Reasons for Attending a High School for Training.

Respondents were also requested to use a ranking system for Question 8 in order to indicate their reason(s) for attending a high school for their training. All 72 respondents provided at least one reason for choosing a high school for training. Table 11 presents the first, second and third most important reasons identified by the respondents with frequencies and percentages.

The first most important reason, reported by 41.7 percent of the respondents, was that there were no tuition or book charges. Slightly over 23 percent noted the convenient location as most important, while almost 10 percent reported that training could be completed in a short period of time. Slightly less than 7 percent each cited

long waiting lists at other types of institutions and a chance to test abilities before attempting a higher level of education.

Table 11

Reasons for Attending a High School for Business Training

<u>Reason</u>	<u>First Response</u>		<u>Second Response</u>		<u>Third Response</u>	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
No tuition or book charges	30	41.7	7	11.3	10	18.5
Other friends were enrolling	1	1.4				
Long waiting list at other types of institutions	5	6.9	3	4.8	1	1.9
Convenient location	17	23.6	27	43.5	11	20.4
Training completed in a short period of time	7	9.7	8	12.9	9	16.7
Convenient hours	3	4.2	13	21.0	18	33.3
Familiar/comfortable setting	1	1.4	1	1.6	3	5.6
To test abilities before attempting a higher level of education	5	6.9	3	4.8	2	3.7
Obtain High School Diploma	1	1.4				
Co-op Education available	1	1.4				
Received advertising in mail	1	1.4				
Total	72	100	62	100	54	100

Sixty-two of the 72 respondents (86.1%) provided a second most important reason for choosing to attend a high school. Of the 62 respondents, 43.5 percent reported convenient location as their second reason, while 21 percent noted convenient hours. Almost 13 percent cited training completed in a short period of time. Slightly over 11 percent chose no tuition or book charges.

Fifty-four of the 72 respondents (75%) provided a third most important reason for attending a high school. Of those 54 respondents, approximately 33 percent reported convenient hours, while 20.4 percent chose convenient location. Slightly more than 18 percent noted no tuition or book charges, and 16.7 noted training completed in a short period of time.

Type of Program(s) Completed. Question 9 requested respondents to identify the type of program(s) they completed while enrolled at the high school and how long they took to complete the program(s). Table 12 presents a summary of the responses.

Approximately 36 percent of the respondents obtained a Business Certificate only, while 27.8 percent obtained both a Business Certificate and Mature High School Diploma. Almost 10 percent completed only the enriched requirements (8.3%) or enriched along with a High School Diploma (1.4%). Over 26 percent of the respondents obtained both

certificates; slightly above 12 percent obtained a Business and Enriched Certificate, while 13.9 percent obtained a Business and Enriched Certificate along with a Mature High School Diploma.

Thirty-three of the 65 respondents (50.8%) completing Business Certificate requirements attended the program for two semesters. Approximately 26 percent attended for three

Table 12

Types of Certificates/Programs and Number of Semesters to Complete Requirements
(n=72)

<u>Type of Certificate</u>	<u>Number of Semesters</u>					No Resp	<u>Total</u>	
	1	2	3	4	5		f	%
Business		15	9	2			26	36.1
Business/Mature High School Diploma	1	6	7	4	1	1	20	27.8
Enriched		2	4				6	8.3
Mature High School Diploma/Enriched	1						1	1.4
Combinations:								
Business/Enriched	3	4	1	1		}	9	12.5
	7	2				}		
Business/Mature High School Diploma/Enriched	1	8		1		}	10	13.9
	8	2				}		
Total							72	100

semesters. Over 12 percent attended for four semesters, 7.7 percent attended for only one semester, and 1.5 percent attended for five semesters. One respondent did not record a time period.

Sixteen of the 25 respondents (64%) completing an Enriched Certificate attended for one semester only. Twenty-four percent attended for two semesters and 16 percent attended for three semesters.

Problems/Barriers Experienced Before or During Program.

Respondents were requested in Question 10 to indicate whether they had experienced any problems or barriers to participating - either before entering or during the program(s). Approximately 61 percent of respondents reported no problems or barriers, while 38.9 percent responded that they had. Table 13 presents a summary of responses.

Table 13

Problems or Barriers to Participating - either Before Entering or During the Program
(n=72)

<u>Response</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Yes	28	38.9
No	44	61.1
Total	72	100.0

Respondents who indicated they had experienced barriers or problems were requested to provide details of the types of barriers or problems they experienced using a ranking process to identify all problems or barriers in their most significant order. Table 14 presents a summary of the problems or barriers with frequencies and percentages.

Of the 28 respondents reporting barriers or problems, 22 (78.6%) reported situational barriers as their first significant problem, 17.9 percent reported attitudinal/dispositional barriers or problems, and 3.6 percent noted institutional barriers. Reported situational barriers included: financial concerns (25%), home responsibilities (21.4%) percent, 'not enough time to study or complete work' (17.9%), 'friends and family did not like the idea' (10.7%), and 'too much all at once' (3.6%). Attitudinal or dispositional barriers included: 'afraid I was too old to learn (14.3%) and 'difficulty settling down to studying again' (3.6%). One respondent provided an institutional barrier: placement in the incorrect skill level of a course.

Twenty of the 28 respondents (71.4%) reported a second personally significant problem or barrier. The responses were about evenly divided between situational and attitudinal/dispositional barriers or problems. The situational barriers included: financial concerns, home responsibilities and 'not enough time to study or complete

Table 14

Identified Problems or Barriers to Participating--Either Before Entering or During the Program (n=28)

Barriers/Problems	Ranking					
	First f %	Second f %	Third f %	Fourth f %	Fifth f %	Sixth f %
Situational:						
Home responsibilities	6 21.4	2 10.0	1 16.7	1 16.7	1 33.3	
Not enough time to study or complete work assigned	5 17.9	2 10.0	1 10.0	1 16.7		
Child care problems		1 5.0				
Friends and/or family did not like the idea	3 10.7		2 20.0			
Financial concerns	7 25.0	2 10.0	1 10.0	3 50.0	1 33.3	
Not enough energy or stamina		1 5.0	2 20.0			1 100.0
Too much all at once	1 3.6					
Stressful personal life		1 5.0				
Attitudinal/Dispositional:						
Afraid I was too old to learn	4 14.3	1 5.0	1 10.0		1 33.3	
Not confident of my abilities		8 40.0	3 30.0			
Don't enjoy studying				1 16.7		
Uncomfortable/afraid around high school students		1 5.0				
Difficulty settling down to studying again	1 3.6					
Institutional:						
Placement in incorrect skill level of course	1 3.6					
Instructor unwilling to provide help outside class		1 5.0				
Total	28 100	20 100	10 100	6 100	3 100	1 100

work assigned' reported at 10 percent each; child care problems, 'not enough energy or stamina', and 'stressful personal life' reported at 5 percent each. Reported attitudinal/dispositional barriers included: 'not confident of my abilities' (40%), 'afraid I was too old to learn' and 'uncomfortable/afraid around high school students reported at 5 percent each. One of the respondents reported an institutional barrier: an instructor was not willing to provide extra help outside class time.

Ten of the 28 respondents (35.7%) reported a third significant problem or barrier. Situational barriers were reported at a rate of 60 percent, attitudinal/dispositional barriers at 40 percent. Situational barriers included: 'friends and/or family did not like the idea' and 'not enough energy or stamina' reported at a rate of 20 percent each, 'not enough time to study or complete work assigned' and financial concerns at 10 percent each. Attitudinal/dispositional barriers included: 'not confident of my abilities' (30%) and 'afraid I was too old to learn (10%).

Six of the 28 respondents (21.4%) identified a fourth significant barrier or problem. Over 80 percent of these were situational and half of these respondents reported financial concerns.

Overcoming Barriers or Problems. Respondents were requested in Question 10, Part B to explain how they overcame the barriers or problems they experienced. Of the 28 respondents who identified barriers or problems, 20 provided details of how they coped with these barriers or problems. Appendix D presents the respondents detailed comments.

Respondents detailed comments were grouped by type of barrier experienced, where possible, and reviewed to determine similarities in responses. Respondents reported the following ways they coped with home responsibilities: all family members became responsible for home jobs, spouse did household jobs, reduced outside activities, cut out entertainment, became better organized, or stayed up later. Respondents who reported they had not been confident of their abilities cited determination, placing education as a number one priority, and a good support group as helping them get through. In order to find time to study and complete assignments respondents reported: setting up a new routine, cutting down on housework, or staying up late. To alleviate financial concerns some respondents noted full or part time employment, social assistance, or cutting down on spending.

Post-training Activities and Program Evaluation

The third section of the survey was concerned with the respondents activities in the first year after completing the adult business program, the courses that were most and least useful to them, and an indication of their satisfaction with the training they received.

Post-training Activities. In Question 11 respondents were asked "What statement(s) would best describe your activities in the first year after completing the adult business program?" Table 15 presents a summary of the responses with frequencies and percentages.

Approximately 61 percent of respondents reported the single activity of employed for wages, either full or part time in their first year after completing the program. An additional 19.4 percent were employed either full or part time along with other activities during the first year after the program.

Fourteen respondents (19.4%) reported seeking employment as a single activity or along with other activities during the first year after training. Question 11 requested these respondents to provide details of whether they eventually found employment. Nine of the 14 respondents eventually found employment. Four respondents did not find employment; two of these respondents noted lack of experience as their problem, one respondent became ill.

Table 15

Activities During First Year After Training
(n=72)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Employed for wages:		
full time	35	48.6
part time	9	12.5
Self-employed	1	1.4
Volunteer work	1	1.4
Continuing education, full time	1	1.4
Seeking employment	3	4.2
Did not seek employment	5	6.9
Multiple activities:		
Employed for wages:		
full and part time	2	2.8
part time: and volunteer work	2	2.8
and self-employed	1	1.4
Seeking employment:		
and employed full time	1	1.4
and employed part time	8	11.1
and volunteer work	1	1.4
and continuing education, full time	1	1.4
No response	1	1.4
<hr/>		
Total	72	100
<hr/>		

One respondent did not indicate whether employment was found.

Description of Work Activities. Question 11 requested respondents to provide details of the type of work they did if they reported employment (full or part time), self-employment or volunteer work. Respondents were also instructed to indicate whether they were using the skills and knowledge acquired in the program. Table 16 provides a summary of the responses with frequencies and percentages regarding the titles or descriptions and use of acquired skills and knowledge.

Sixty-one respondents experienced work activities during the first year after completing the program. Twenty-one of the 61 respondents (34.4%) reported secretarial, reception, or administrative assistant work activities. Fifteen (24.6%) were involved in office or clerical activities, 10 (16.4%) reported accounting related activities, 6 (9.8%) were working in sales related positions, 4 (6.6%) reported computer related positions, 2 (3.3%) were involved in management activities, 1 (1.6%) reported maintenance work, and 1 (1.6%) reported senior citizen support activities. One respondent provided no title or description of the work activities they were involved in.

Table 16

Job Titles/Descriptions of Respondents Work Activities in First Year After Completing Program and Application of Acquired Skills and Knowledge (n=61)

<u>Job Title/Description</u>	<u>Response</u>		<u>Use of Skills/Knowledge</u>					
	f	%	<u>Yes</u>		<u>No</u>		<u>No Response</u>	
			f	%	f	%	f	%
Secretarial:								
General	9	14.8	9	14.8				
Medical	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Executive	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Administrative	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Legal	3	4.9	3	4.9				
Administrative Assistant	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Receptionist	2	3.3	2	3.3				
Secretary/Receptionist	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Medical Records/ Receptionist	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Clerical:								
Office	10	16.4	9	14.8	1	1.6		
No description	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Office:								
No description	2	3.3	2	3.3				
Various temporary	2	3.3	1	1.6			1	1.6
Accounting:								
Technician/Clerk	8	13.1	7	11.4	1	1.6		
Tax preparation	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Computer data entry	4	6.6	4	6.6				
Sales:								
Pari-mutual clerk	1	1.6			1	1.6		
Loto ticket sales	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Telephone Sales Agent	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Clerk	2	3.3	2	3.3				
Management:								
Assistant Manager	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Entrepreneur	1	1.6	1	1.6				

continued on next page

Table 16 continued

<u>Job Title/Description</u>	<u>Use of Skills/Knowledge</u>							
	<u>Response</u>		<u>Yes</u>		<u>No</u>		<u>No</u>	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Maintenance	1	1.6			1	1.6		
Senior citizen care - banking/shopping	1	1.6			1	1.6		
Combinations:								
Bookkeeping and casual worker - hospital	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Reception/Sales/Bank Teller	1	1.6	1	1.6				
Various caregiving/ Sales Clerk	1	1.6			1	1.6		
No title or description	1	1.6					1	1.6
Total	61	100	53	86.9	6	9.8	2	3.3

Fifty-three of the 61 respondents (86.9%) reported using skills and knowledge acquired from the program, 6 respondents (9.8%) did not use newly acquired skills.

All respondents indicating secretarial, reception, or administrative assistant (34.4%), computer data entry (6.6%), and management (3.2) activities reported using skills and knowledge from the program. Approximately 1.6

percent of respondents in each of the following categories felt they were not using the new skills and knowledge: accounting, office or clerical, maintenance, and senior care. Slightly over 3 percent of respondents indicating sales related activities felt they were not using new skills. Two respondents did not indicate whether they were using their skills.

Continuing Education Activities. Respondents were requested in Question 11, Part B to provide details of any continuing education activities they became involved in within the first year of completing the program. Only 5 respondents (6.9%) reported involvement in continuing education activities. One respondent continued education of a full time basis, while 4 were involved in part time activities. Table 17 presents a summary of the responses.

Courses Completed During Program. Respondents were requested in Question 12, Part A to indicate the courses they took during the program. Seventy-one respondents completed the question. Table 18 presents a summary of course frequencies and percentages.

The most frequently reported courses were Office Procedures 302 (91.5%), Data Processing 202 (88.7%), Data Processing 302 (85.9%), Accounting 202 (85.9%), Accounting 302 (83.1%) and Typing 202/205 (73.2%).

Table 17

Continuing Education Activities After Completing the Adult Program
(n=5)

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Full time:		
University degree program	1	20
Part time:		
University certificate program	1	20
Volunteer program	1	20
Work sponsored courses	1	20
Professional program	1	20
Total	5	100

Part B of Question 12 asked respondents: "Of those courses [taken], which ones do you feel were most useful to you?" Sixty-two respondents marked most useful courses (see Table 18). Of the six courses most frequently reported as taken (Part A), Data Processing 302 reported the highest most useful frequency (73.8%). Typing 202/205 reported a rate of 67.3 percent and Office Procedures 302, 66.2 percent. Courses taken by a lower frequency of respondents identified as most useful by a high percentage of respondents included: Typing 302 (71.8%), Executive Secretary 305 (65%) and Co-op Ed 305 (56.3%). Computer

Table 18

Frequency of Courses Taken During Program with Most and Least Useful Courses Identified
(n=71)

<u>Course Name</u>	<u>Taken</u>		<u>Most Useful</u>		<u>Least Useful</u>	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
Accounting 202	61	85.9	26	42.6	12	19.7
Accounting 302	59	83.1	24	40.7	16	27.1
Business Law 302	12	16.9	6	50.0	2	16.7
Business Math 305	22	31.0	8	36.4	7	31.8
Communications 305	24	33.8	11	45.8	6	25.0
Computerized						
Accounting 305	33	46.5	11	33.3	6	18.2
Data Processing 202	63	88.7	33	52.4	15	23.8
Data Processing 302	61	85.9	45	73.8	5	8.2
Economics 301	1	1.4			1	1.4
Executive						
Secretary 305	20	28.2	13	65.0	5	25.0
General Business 101	5	7.0	2	40.0	2	40.0
Office Procedures 302	65	91.5	43	66.2	7	10.8
Typing 102/						
Keyboarding 105	26	36.6	12	46.2	2	7.7
Typing 202/205	52	73.2	35	67.3	2	3.8
Typing 302	39	54.9	28	71.8	1	2.6
Medical Office 305	9	12.7	3	33.3	4	44.4
Legal Office 305	7	9.9	3	42.9	3	42.9
Math 301	5	7.0	2	40.0	1	20.0
Co-op Ed 305	16	22.5	9	56.3	2	12.5
Management 302	2	2.8				
Computer Awareness	1	1.4	1	100.0		
Electronic						
Communications	1	1.4				
English (Upgrade)	1				1	100.0
Marketing 202	1	1.4	1	100.0		

Awareness and Marketing 202, reported by one respondent each as being taken, were also considered most useful.

Part C of Question 12 asked respondents to indicate which courses were least useful. Forty-five respondents

marked least useful courses (see Table 18). Of the six most frequently reported courses taken (from Part A), Accounting 302 (27.1%) and Data Processing 202 (23.8%) reported the highest least useful frequency. Courses taken by a lower frequency of respondents, identified as least useful by a higher percentage of respondents included: Medical Office 305 (44.4%), Legal Office 305 (42.9%), General Business 101 (40%) and Business Math (31.8%). One respondent identified English (Upgrade) as taken, but least useful.

Respondents were requested in Parts D and E of Question 12 to indicate why they felt the courses they had marked in Part B and C were most or least useful. Responses were summarized and grouped into response categories, where possible. Table 19 and 20 present frequencies and percentages for the all the responses.

Of the 62 respondents who indicated most useful courses, 61 provided comments concerning why they were considered most useful (see Table 19). Thirty-nine (62.9%) of those respondents reported that they used the skills or knowledge from those courses in their job. Almost 10 percent indicated the courses were useful for basic knowledge. Over 6 percent noted that the courses had upgraded or updated their skills and knowledge, 4.8 percent

Table 19

Reported Reasons for Courses Chosen as Most Useful
(n=62)

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Used in job everyday	39	62.9
Useful basic knowledge	6	9.7
Upgraded/updated skills and knowledge	4	6.5
Interesting/interested in subject	3	4.8
Increased comfort level and knowledge of computers	1	1.6
Used for personal use	1	1.6
Developed confidence	1	1.6
Will use when job search begins	1	1.6
Instructors explained concepts well	1	1.6
Useful to continue education	1	1.6
Personal expectations met	1	1.6
Combinations:		
Increased comfort level with computers and self-confidence	1	1.6
Useful in job and continuing education	1	1.6
No response	1	1.6
Total	62	100

Table 20

Reported Reasons for Courses Chosen as Least Useful
(n=45)

<u>Reason</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Don't use skills in job	19	42.2
Common sense or not new knowledge	5	11.1
Not taught well	4	8.9
Presently don't use skills	3	6.7
Information too general or no practical value	3	6.7
Not personally interested in course	2	4.4
Not necessary knowledge	2	4.4
Outdated materials for learning	1	2.2
Did not develop good command of subject	1	2.2
Do not have enough work experience to apply knowledge from course	1	2.2
Combinations:		
Not presently applying skills/no practical application	1	2.2
Not necessary knowledge/not enough skill or knowledge	1	2.2
Not taught well/not personally intending to use	1	2.2
No response	1	2.2
Total	45	100

reported that the courses were interesting or that they had been interested in the subject content. Other responses, reported at a rate of 1.6 percent included: increased comfort level and knowledge of computers, used for personal use, developed confidence, will use when job search begins, instructors explained concepts well, useful to continue education and personal expectations met. Two respondents provided several comments for why courses were most useful: increased comfort level with computers and self-confidence, and useful in job and continuing education. Of the 45 respondents who indicated least useful courses, 44 provided comments concerning why they were considered least useful (see Table 20). Slightly over 42 percent indicated they did not use the skills or knowledge from these courses in their job. Approximately 11 percent reported that the courses were common sense or did not present new knowledge. Almost 9 percent reported the courses were not taught well. 'Information was too general or of no practical value' and 'presently don't use skills' were reported at a rate of 6.7 each. Four respondents reported they were not personally interested in the course (4.4%) or did not feel that it was necessary knowledge (4.4%). Other responses, reported at a rate of 2.2 percent each included: outdated materials for learning, did not develop good command of subject, and do not have enough work experience to apply knowledge. Three

respondents reported several reasons for why courses were least useful: not presently applying skills or no practical application, not necessary knowledge or not enough skill or knowledge, and not taught well or not personally intending to use knowledge.

Overall Rating of Adult Program. Question 13 asked respondents: "Overall, how would you rate the adult business program you participated in?" A five-point rating scale was used. Table 21 presents response frequencies and percentages. Three respondents did not provide an overall rating of the program. All other respondents indicated a rating of average or better. Slightly over 44 percent indicated a rating of excellent, 38.9 percent indicated the program was above average, and 12.5 percent reported the program was average.

Rating of Specific Aspects of Adult Program. Question 13, Part B requested respondents to rate ten aspects of the adult program using a five-point rating scale, adding an additional choice for items not applicable to the respondent. Table 22 provides a summary of the response frequencies and percentages.

Table 21

Overall Rating of Adult Business Program
(n=72)

<u>Rating</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Excellent	32	44.4
Above average	28	38.9
Average	9	12.5
Below average	0	0
Poor	0	0
No response	3	4.2
Total	72	100

Approximately 48 percent of respondents rated the quality of instruction as excellent, 37.5 percent considered it above average and 12.5 percent reported a rating of average. One respondent did not provide a rating.

Slightly over 90 percent of respondents rated teacher interest and support as above average (40.3%) or excellent (50%). Almost 7 percent reported a rating of average, 1.4 percent noted a below average rating. One respondent did not provide a rating.

Table 22
 Rating of Specific Aspects of Adult Program
 (n=72)

<u>Aspect</u>	<u>Rating</u>															
	Excellent f	Excellent %	Above Average f	Above Average %	Average f	Average %	Below Average f	Below Average %	Poor f	Poor %	Not Applicable f	Not Applicable %	Incomplete Marking or No Response f	Incomplete Marking or No Response %	Total f	Total %
Quality of instruction	35	48.6	27	37.5	9	12.5							1	1.4	72	100
Teacher interest/support	36	50.0	29	40.3	5	6.9	1	1.4					1	1.4	72	100
Instructional materials and aids	28	38.9	23	31.9	19	26.4					1	1.4	1	1.4	72	100
Vocational counselling	12	16.7	11	15.3	28	38.9	5	6.9	2	2.8	13	18.1	1	1.4	72	100
Job interview preparation	19	26.4	25	34.7	18	25.0	5	6.9	3	4.2	1	1.4	1	1.4	72	100
Practical application of training to your job	16	22.2	26	36.1	18	25.0	4	5.6	1	1.4	4	5.6	3	4.2	72	100
Providing employability skills	21	29.2	32	44.4	14	19.4	1	1.4	1	1.4	1	1.4	2	2.8	72	100
Time scheduling of courses	22	30.6	38	52.8	11	15.3	1	1.4							72	100
Equipment	16	22.2	22	30.6	30	41.7	1	1.4	1	1.4	1	1.4	1	1.4	72	100
Location of program	49	68.1	15	20.8	7	9.7							1	1.4	72	100

Instructional materials and aids were rated as excellent by 38.9 percent of respondents, above average by 31.9 percent, and average by 26.4 percent. One respondent did not consider this aspect applicable to them, and one did not respond.

Slightly over 38.9 percent of respondents rated vocational counselling as average. Approximately 18 percent chose not to rate this aspect of the program as it did not apply to them. An excellent rating was noted by 16.7 percent, above average by 15.3 percent, below average by 6.9 percent, and poor by 2.8 percent. One respondent did not provide a rating.

Approximately 61 percent of respondents rated the program's job interview preparation as excellent (26.4%) or above average (34.7%). Twenty-five percent of respondents noted a rating of average, 6.9 percent a below average rating, and 4.2 percent a poor rating. One respondent did not rate this aspect of the program as it was not applicable to them, and one respondent did not provide a rating.

Slightly over 36 percent of respondents rated the practical application of the training to their job as above average. Twenty-five percent provided a rating of average, while 22.2 percent rated it excellent. Respondents rated this aspect of the program as below average or not applicable to them at a rate of 5.6 percent each. One respondent felt it was poor, and one did not respond.

Almost 74 percent of respondents felt the program's provision of employability skills was above average (44.4%) or excellent (29.2%). Slightly over 19 percent noted a rating of average. A below average and poor rating was reported at a rate of 1.4 each. One respondent did not feel this aspect of the program applied to them, and two respondents did not provide a rating.

The time scheduling of courses was rated by 52.8 percent as above average. Over 30 percent noted a rating of excellent, 15.3 percent provided an average rating, and 1.4 percent gave a poor rating.

Equipment was rated as average by 41.7 percent of respondents. Slightly over 52 percent gave an above average (30.6%) or excellent (22.2%) rating. A rating of below average or poor was reported by 1.4 percent each. One respondent did not provide a rating as it was not applicable to them, and one respondent did not provide a rating.

Program location was rated by 89 percent of respondents as excellent (68.1%) or above average (20.8%). Almost 10 percent rated the location as average. One respondent did not provide a rating.

Respondent Comments, Remarks, Suggestions. Respondents were encouraged in Question 14 to make additional comments, remarks, and suggestions concerning the adult business program. Appendix E presents the respondents detailed comments. Forty-four respondents (61%) provided comments

that were organized into categories. Sixteen comments were categorized as positive concerning the program, 8 concerned self-confidence, 2 were regarding counselling services, 5 related to instructors, and 13 were not grouped under a specific category.

Further Analysis - Responses Combined

In this section various demographic characteristics are combined with responses concerning reasons for attending the program, barriers or problems experienced, and overall rating of the program to determine possible connections between responses.

Age and Reason for Attending Program. Table 23 presents the results of combining the respondents' age categories with their first ranked reason for attending the program.

The 'under 25' age category reported 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment' at a rate of 72.2 percent. Approximately 11 percent reported 'develop new skills for personal use'. 'Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment' and 'obtain a mature high school diploma required in order to continue education' were reported at a rate of 5.5 percent each. One respondent incorrectly marked responses so that ranking could not be determined.

Respondents between the age of 25 and 29 reported their first reason for attending was to 'develop new skills to

Table 23

Age and First Ranked Reason for Attending the Adult Program
(n=72)

First Ranked Reason	Age Category											Total
	Under 25 f %	25 - 29 f %	30 - 34 f %	35 - 39 f %	40 - 44 f %	45 - 49 f %	50 - 54 f %	55 and over f %				
Develop new skills to obtain immediate employment	13 72.2	5 55.5	1 20.0	5 41.7	5 33.3	5 71.4	3 75.0	1 50.0	38			
Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment	1 5.5		3 60.0	2 16.7	2 13.3				8			
Develop new skills for personal use	2 11.1			2 16.7	2 13.3	2 28.6	1 25.0		9			
Obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction		2 22.2		3 25.0	1 6.7			1 50.0	7			
Obtain a mature high school diploma required in order to continue education	1 5.5	2 22.2							3			
Prove to family member never too old to learn					1 6.7				1			
Upgrade skills for future employment					2 13.3				2			
Incorrect marking	1 5.5		1 20.0		1 6.7				3			
No response					1 6.7				1			
Total	18 100	9 100	5 100	12 100	15 100	7 100	4 100	2 100	72			

obtain immediate employment', at a rate of 55.5 percent.

'Obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction' or '...required in order to continue education' were reported at a rate of 22.2 percent each.

Sixty percent of the 30 to 34 age group reported 'upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment'. Twenty percent indicated 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment'. One respondent incorrectly marked responses so that ranking could not be determined.

Approximately 42 percent of respondents in the 35 to 39 age group indicated 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment'. Other responses included: 'obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction' (25%), 'upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment' (16.7%), and 'develop new skills for personal use' (16.7%).

The 40 to 44 age group reported 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment' at a rate of 33.3 percent. 'Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment', 'develop new skills for personal use', and 'upgrade skills for future employment' were reported at a rate of 13.3 percent each. 'Obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction' and 'prove to family member never to old to learn' were reported at a rate of 6.7 each. One respondent incorrectly marked responses so that ranking could not be determined, one did not respond.

Over 71 percent of respondents in the 45 to 49 age category reported 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment'. 'Develop new skills for personal use' was reported by 28.8 percent of these respondents.

Respondents of the 50 to 54 age category reported 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment' at a rate of 75 percent. 'Develop new skills for personal use' was reported at a rate of 25 percent.

Respondents in the over 55 age category reported 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment' (50%) and 'obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction (50%).

Previous education and Reason for Attending Program.

Table 24 presents the results of combining the respondents previous level of training and their first reason for attending the program.

Approximately 66 percent of the 3 respondents with only junior high school partially completed or completed reported their first reason for attending the program was to obtain a mature high school diploma either for personal satisfaction (33.3%) or it was required in order to continue education (33.3%). Slightly more than 33 percent indicated to 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment'.

Of the 25 respondents with high school partially completed, 40 percent indicated participation in order to

Table 24

Previous Education and First Ranked Reason for Attending the Adult Program (n=72)

First Ranked Reason	Level of Education										Total		
	Junior High	Partially Completed	High School Completed	Community/ Private College	University	Other	Total	f	%	f		%	
Develop new skills to obtain immediate employment	1	10	15	3	9	1	38	1	40.0	68.2	27.3	90.0	38
Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment		2	3	2	1	1	8	2	8.0	13.6	18.2	10.0	8
Develop new skills for personal use	4	4	3	1			9	4	16.0	13.6	9.1		9
Obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction	1	4		2			7	1	33.3	16.0	18.2		7
Obtain a mature high school diploma required in order to continue education	1	2					3	1	33.3	8.0			3
Prove to family member never to old to learn		1					1	1	4.0				1
Upgrade skills for future employment		2		2			4	2	8.0	4.5	18.2		4
Incorrect marking							3						3
No response				1			1	1			9.1		1
Total	3	25	22	11	10	1	72	3	100	100	100	100	72

develop new skills to obtain immediate employment. 'Develop new skills for personal use' and 'obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction' were reported at a rate of 16 percent each. 'Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment' and 'obtain a mature high school diploma required in order to continue education' were reported at a rate of 8 percent each. One respondent (4%) indicated their first reason for attending the program was to prove to a family member that individuals are never too old to learn. Two respondents (8%) incorrectly marked responses so that ranking could not be determined.

Approximately 68 percent of 22 respondents with completed high school as their previous level of training indicated participation in order to develop new skills to obtain immediate employment. 'Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment' and 'develop new skills for personal use' were reported at a rate of 13.6 percent each. One respondent (4.5%) incorrectly marked responses so that ranking could not be determined.

Respondents with Community College or Private Business College partially completed or completed reported various responses for participation in the program. Responses included: develop new skills (27.3%) or upgrade previously learned skills (18.2%) to obtain immediate employment, upgrade skills for future employment (18.2%), obtain a mature high school diploma for personal satisfaction

(18.2%), and develop new skills for personal use (9.1%). One respondent did not provide a reason for participation.

Of the 10 respondents with university partially completed or completed 90 percent reported 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment'. Ten percent reported 'upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment.

The respondent with a completed hospital nursing program reported participation to develop new skills for personal use.

Age and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before or During Program. Table 25 presents the results of combining the age categories of respondents with their reported barriers or problems experienced before or during the program.

Five of the 18 respondents in the under 25 age category (27.8%) reported barriers or problems. The first ranked problem or barrier reported by all five respondents (100%) was situational. Four of the respondents (80%) reported a second barrier or problem; 75 percent were situational, 25 percent institutional. Two of the respondents (40%) identified a third barrier or problem, both situational. One respondent (20%) reported a fifth problem that was situational.

Of the nine respondents in the 25 to 29 age group, three (33.3%) reported barriers or problems. The first

Table 25

Age Category and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before Entering or During the Program (n=28)

Age Category	f	First		Second		Third		Fourth		Fifth		Sixth	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Under 25	5	5 S	100.0	3 S 1 I	75.0 25.0	2 S	100.0	1 S	100.0				
25 to 29	3	3 S	100.0	1 S 1 A	50.0 50.0	1 A	100.0						
30 to 34	1	1 S	100.0										
35 to 39	5	3 S 2 A	60.0 40.0	2 S 2 A	50.0 50.0	2 S 1 A	66.7 33.3	1 S 1 A	50.0 50.0	1 S	100.0		
40 to 44	5	3 S 1 A 1 I	60.0 20.0 20.0	1 S 1 A	50.0 50.0								
45 to 49	4	2 S 2 A	50.0 50.0	1 S 3 A	25.0 75.0	1 S 1 A	50.0 50.0	2 S	100.0	1 S	100.0		
50 to 54	3	2 S 1 A	66.7 33.3	3 A	100.0	1 S	100.0						
55 and over	2	2 S	100.0	1 S	100.0	1 A	100.0	1 S	100.0	1 A	100.0	1 S	100.0
Total	28	28		20		10		6		3		1	

S = situational
A = attitudinal
I = institutional

ranked problem or barrier reported by all three respondents (100%) was situational. Two of the respondents (66.7%) reported a second problem or barrier; situational and attitudinal at 50 percent each. One of the respondents (33.3%) identified a third problem that was attitudinal.

One respondent of the 12 in the 30 to 34 age category (8.3%) reported a barrier or problem. This problem was identified as situational.

Of the 12 respondents in the 35 to 39 age category, 5 (41.7%) reported barriers or problems. Sixty percent of the first ranked problems were situational; 40 percent, attitudinal. Four of the respondents (80%) reported a second problem: situational or attitudinal at a rate of 50 percent each. Three respondents (60%) identified a third problem; 66.7 percent were situational, 33.3 percent attitudinal. Two respondents (40%) reported a fourth problem. Attitudinal and situational problems were equally reported. One respondent (20%) reported a fifth, situational problem.

Five of the 15 respondents in the 40 to 44 age group (33.3%) reported barriers or problems. The first ranked problem was reported by 60 percent as situational and 20 percent each as attitudinal or institutional. Two respondents (40%) indicated a second barrier or problem; situational and attitudinal were equally reported.

Of the seven respondents in the 45 to 49 age category, four (57.1%) reported barriers or problems. The first ranked problems were situational or attitudinal at a rate of 50 percent each. The four respondents reported a second problem: attitudinal problems were reported at a rate of 75 percent, situational at 25 percent. Two respondents (50%) reported a third problem that was either attitudinal (50%) or situational (50%). Two respondents (50%) reported a fourth, situational problem. One respondent (25%) identified a fifth, situational problem.

Three of the four respondents (75%) in the 50 to 54 age group reported barriers or problems. The first reported problem was either situational at a rate of 66.7 percent or attitudinal at 33.3 percent. The three respondents also identified a second, attitudinal problem. One respondent (33.3%) reported a third, situational problem.

Both respondents (100%) in the 55 and over age category reported barriers or problems. The first reported problems were situational. One of the respondents (50%) reported a second, situational problem; a third, attitudinal problem; a fourth, situational problem; a fifth, attitudinal problem; and a sixth, situational problem.

Previous Education and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before or During Program. Table 26 presents the results of combining the previous education of respondents and their ranking of barriers or problems experienced before or during the program.

Two of the three respondents (66.7%) in the junior high category reported barriers or problems. The two respondents indicated attitudinal problems (100%) for both first and second ranked problems. One of the respondents (50%) identified a third and fourth situational problem.

Eleven of the 25 respondents (44%) with high school, partially completed, reported problems or barriers. Situational problems were reported at a rate of 90.9 percent, attitudinal at a rate of 9.1 percent for the first noted problem. Eight of the respondents (72.7%) reported a second problem. Situational problems were reported at a rate of 62.5 percent, attitudinal were reported at 37.5 percent. Six of the respondents (54.5%) reported a third problem; situational and attitudinal problems were equally reported. Two respondents (18.2%) identified a fourth problem, situational and attitudinal problems were reported equally. One respondent (9.1%) reported a fifth, situational problem.

Of the 22 respondents with high school completed, 8 (36.4%) reported problems or barriers. The first rated problem was reported as situational by 87.5 percent,

Table 26

Previous Education and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before Entering or During the Program (n=28)

Previous Education	Ranking of Barriers/Problems					
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
f	f	f	f	f	f	f
%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Junior High	2	2	1	1	1	1
	A	A	S	S	S	S
	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
High School:						
Partially completed	11	5	3	1	1	1
	10	S	S	S	S	S
	90.9	62.5	50.0	50.0	50.0	100.0
	1	A	3	1	1	1
	9.1	37.5	50.0	50.0	50.0	100.0
		3	A	1	A	50.0
Completed	8	2	1	1	1	1
	7	S	S	S	S	S
	87.5	50.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
	1	A	1	1	1	1
	12.5	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0	25.0
		1	I	1	I	25.0
Community/Private Business College	3	1	2	2	1	1
	2	S	1	S	1	S
	66.7	50.0	100.0	100.0	50.0	100.0
	1	I	1	A	1	A
	33.3	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
University	4	2	2	2	2	2
	2	S	S	S	S	S
	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
	2	A	2	A	2	A
	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0	50.0
Total	28	20	10	6	3	1
	28	20	10	6	3	1

S = situational
A = attitudinal
I = institutional

attitudinal by 12.5 percent. Four of the respondents (50%) reported a second problem; 50 percent were situational, while attitudinal and institutional problems were reported at 25 percent each. One respondent (12.5%) reported a third and fourth problem that was situational.

Three of the 11 respondents (27.3%) with community or private business college training reported barriers or problems. The first rated problem was either situational (66.7%) or institutional (33.3%) in nature. Two respondents (66.7%) reported a second, third, fourth and fifth problem. The second reported problems were either situational (50%) or attitudinal (50%). Third reported problems were attitudinal, while fourth reported problems were situational. Fifth rated problems were situational (50%) or attitudinal (50%). One respondent (33.3%) reported a sixth, situational problem.

Of the 10 respondents with university level training, 4 (40%) reported barriers or problems. The four respondents reported both first and second ranked problems. At both levels the problems were situational and attitudinal at a rate of 50 percent each.

Time since Previous Education and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before or During Program. Table 27 presents the results of combining the time period since the respondents previous level of training and their ranking of barriers or problems experienced before or during the program.

Two of the 15 respondents (13.3%) who completed their previous education 1 to 2 years prior to entering the program reported two barriers or problems. The first reported problems were situational. The second noted problems were situational or institutional at a rate of 50 percent each.

Of the 8 respondents who completed their previous education 3 to 5 years prior to entering the program, 3 (37.5%) reported barriers or problems. The first noted problems were situational. One respondent (33.3%) reported a second, third and fourth problem that was situational in nature.

Three of the six respondents (50%) who completed their previous education 6 to 10 years prior to the program reported problems or barriers. The first noted problems were situational. The three respondents noted a second problem: situational problems were reported at a rate of 66.7 percent, attitudinal at a rate of 33.3 percent. Two respondents (66.7%) reported a third problem, situational or attitudinal reported at an equal rate.

Table 27

Time Period Since Previous Education and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before Entering or During the Program (n=28)

Time Period Since Previous Education	f	First		Second		Third		Fourth		Fifth		Sixth	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1 to 2 years	2	2	S 100.0	1	S 50.0								
				1	I 50.0								
3 to 5 years	3	3	S 100.0	1	S 100.0	1	S 100.0	1	S 100.0				
6 to 10 years	3	3	S 100.0	2	S 66.7	1	S 50.0						
				1	A 33.3	1	A 50.0						
11 to 15 years	2	1	S 50.0	1	A 100.0								
		1	A 50.0										
16 to 20 years	8	6	S 75.0	2	S 33.3	3	S 60.0	2	S 66.7	2	S 100.0		
		2	A 25.0	4	A 66.7	2	A 40.0	1	A 33.3				
21 to 25 years	1	1	S 100.0										
over 25 years	8	5	S 62.5	3	S 42.9	1	S 50.0	2	S 100.0	1	A 100.0	1	S 100.0
		3	A 37.5	4	A 57.1	1	A 50.0						
No response	1	1	I 100.0										
Total	28	28		20		10		6		3		1	

S = situational
A = attitudinal
I = institutional

Of the 8 respondents who completed their previous education 11 to 15 years prior to the program, 2 (25%) reported problems or barriers. The first rated problem was reported equally as situational or attitudinal. One respondent (50%) reported a second, attitudinal problem.

Eight of the 17 respondents (47.1%) who completed their previous education 16 to 20 years prior to the program reported barriers or problems. The first reported problem was either situational (75%) or attitudinal (25%) in nature. Six of the respondents (75%) reported a second barrier or problem; approximately 67 percent were attitudinal, 33 percent situational. Five respondents (62.5%) reported a third problem, 60 percent were situational and 40 percent were attitudinal. Three respondents (37.5%) reported a fourth problem; approximately 67 percent were situational and 33 percent were attitudinal. Two respondents (25%) reported a fifth, situational problem.

The one respondent who completed their previous education 21 to 24 years prior to entering the program reported a problem. This problem was reported as situational.

Eight of the 14 respondents (57.1%) who completed their previous education over 25 years prior to entering the program reported problems. First noted problems were situational (62.5%) and attitudinal (33.3%). Seven respondents (87.5%) reported a second problem.

Approximately 57 percent were attitudinal, 43 percent situational. Two respondents (25%) reported a third and fourth problem. The third problems were equally reported as attitudinal or situational. The fourth problems were reported as situational. One respondent (12.5%) reported a fifth, attitudinal problem and a sixth, situational problem.

One respondent who did not provide a time period since their previous education reported an institutional problem.

Marital and Dependent Status and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before or During Program. Table 28 presents the results of combining the marital and dependent status of the respondents and their ranking of barriers or problems experienced before or during the program.

Seven of the 18 respondents (38.9%) who were single with no dependents reported barriers or problems. The first noted problems were situational. Five of the respondents (71.4%) reported a second problem: situational and attitudinal were reported at a rate of 40 percent each, institutional were reported at 20 percent. Three of the respondents (42.9%) reported a third problem. Attitudinal problems were reported at a rate of 66.7 percent, situational at 33.3 percent. Two respondents (28.6%) reported a fourth problem, attitudinal or situational reported equally. One respondent (14.3%) reported a fifth, situational problem.

Table 28

Marital/Dependent Status and Ranking of Barriers or Problems Experienced Before Entering of During the Program (n=28)

Marital/Dependent Status	f	First		Second		Third		Fourth		Fifth		Sixth	
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Single:													
no dependents	7	7	S 100.0	2	S 40.0	1	S 33.3	1	S 50.0	1	S 100.0		
				2	A 40.0	2	A 66.7	1	A 50.0				
				1	I 20.0								
Married:													
children	11	6	S 54.5	2	S 33.3	3	S 100.0	2	S 100.0				
		5	A 45.5	4	A 66.7								
children/relatives	1	1	S 100.0	1	A 100.0								
children/spouse	1	1	S 100.0	1	S 100.0								
no dependents	1	1	S 100.0	1	S 100.0								
Separated/Divorced:													
children	4	4	S 100.0	3	S 75.0	2	A 100.0	2	S 100.0	1	S 50.0	1	S 100.0
				1	A 25.0					1	A 50.0		
no dependents	2	1	S 50.0	2	A 100.0	1	S 100.0						
		1	A 50.0										
No response	1	1	I 100.0										
Total	28	28		20		10		6		3		1	

S = situational
A = attitudinal
I - institutional

Of the 29 respondents who were married with children, 11 (37.9%) reported barriers or problems. The first rated problems were situational (54.5%) or attitudinal (45.5%). Six of the respondents (54.5%) reported a second problem. Approximately 67 percent were reported as attitudinal, 33 percent were situational. Three of the respondents (27.3%) reported a third, situational problem. Two respondents (18.2%) reported a fourth, situational problem.

The one respondent who was married, with children and relatives as dependents, reported two barriers. A situational barrier was reported first, followed by an attitudinal barrier or problem.

One of the two respondents (50%) who was married, with children and a spouse as dependents, reported three barriers or problems, all situational.

Of the seven respondents who were married with no dependents, one (14.3%) reported two barriers or problems. These problems were both situational.

Four of the six (66.7%) respondents who were separated or divorced with children reported barriers or problems. The first noted problems were situational. The four respondents also reported a second problem, 75 percent were situational and 25 percent were attitudinal. Two respondents (50%) reported a third, fourth and fifth problem. The third problems were attitudinal, fourth were situational, and the fifth problems were equally situational

or attitudinal. One respondent (25%) reported a sixth, situational problem.

The two respondents who were separated or divorced with no dependents reported problems or barriers. The first noted problem was equally reported as situational or attitudinal. The two respondents reported a second problem that was attitudinal. One respondent (50%) reported a third, situational problem.

One respondent, who did not provide a marital and dependent status description, reported an institutional barrier.

Age and Overall Rating of Program. Table 29 presents the results of combining the age categories of the respondents and their overall rating of the program.

Approximately 55 percent of the 18 respondents in the 'under 25' age group rated the program as above average. An excellent rating was noted by 33.3 percent and 11.1 percent rated the program average.

The nine respondents in the 25 to 29 age group rated the program as excellent (66.7%) or average (33.3%).

Of the five respondents in the 30 to 34 age group, 60 percent reported an excellent rating while 40 percent reported above average.

The 12 respondents in the 35 to 39 age group reported an excellent or above average rating equally.

Table 29

Age Category and Overall Rating of Adult Program
(n=72)

Age Category	Excellent		Above Average		Average		Rating Below Average		Poor		No Response		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
under 25	6	33.3	10	55.5	2	11.1							18	100
25 to 29 years	6	66.7			3	33.3							9	100
30 to 34 years	3	60.0	2	40.0									5	100
35 to 39 years	6	50.0	6	50.0									12	100
40 to 44 years	5	33.3	6	40.0	3	20.0					1	6.7	15	100
45 to 49 years	4	57.1	2	28.6	1	14.2							7	100
50 to 54 years	2	50.0	1	25.0							1	25.0	4	100
55 and over			1	50.0							1	50.0	2	100
Total	32		28		9						3		72	

Of the 15 respondents in the 40 to 44 age category, 40 percent rated the program above average, 33.3 percent gave an excellent rating, and 20 percent rated the program average. One respondent did not provide an overall rating of the program.

Approximately 57 percent of the 7 respondents in the 45 to 49 age category gave the program a rating of excellent. A rating of above average was reported by 28.6 percent and average by 14.2 percent.

Of the 4 respondents in the 50 to 54 age category, 50 percent rated the program excellent. Twenty-five percent rated the program above average. One respondent did not provide a rating.

Of the two respondents in the 55 and over age category, 50 percent rated the program above average. One respondent did not rate the program.

Previous Education and Overall Rating of Program.

Table 30 presents the results of combining the previous level of training of the respondents and their overall rating of the program.

The three respondents in the junior high category rated the program as excellent (66.7%) or above average (33.3%).

Of the 25 respondents with partially completed high school education, 44 percent rated the program above average. A rating of excellent was reported by 40 percent

Table 30

Previous Education and Overall Rating of Program
(n=72)

Previous Education Level	Excellent		Above Average		Average		Rating Below Average		Poor		No Response		Total	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Junior High	2	66.7	1	33.3									3	100
High School:														
Partially completed	10	40.0	11	44.0	3	12.0					1	4.0	25	100
Completed	9	40.9	8	36.4	4	18.2					1	4.5	22	100
Community/Private Business College	3	27.3	5	45.5	2	18.2					1	9.1	11	100
University	7	70.0	3	30.0									10	100
Other:														
Hospital Nursing	1	100.0											1	100
Total	32		28		9						3		72	

and average by 12 percent. One respondent did not provide a rating.

The 22 respondents with completed high school rated the program excellent (40.9%), above average (36.4%), or average (18.2%). One respondent did not provide a rating.

Over 45 percent of the 11 respondents with community/private business college education rated the program as above average. Slightly over 27 percent rated the program excellent and 18.2 percent reported average. One respondent did not provide a rating.

The 10 respondents with university level training rated the program excellent (70%) or above average (30%); while the respondent with hospital nursing training rated the program excellent.

CHAPTER 5

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

This study was an attempt to add to existing adult education knowledge concerning participation, barriers to participation, and satisfaction with training with respect to high school business programs.

In this chapter, the study is summarized, conclusions are drawn, and recommendation for future research are presented.

Summary

Data obtained from the respondents revealed:

1. The majority of the respondents were female (98.6%).
2. Approximately 37 percent of the respondents were between the ages of 35 to 39 (16.7%) and 40 to 44 (20.8%). Twenty-five percent were under 25 years of age.
3. Approximately 38 percent of respondents did not have a high school diploma prior to entering the adult program. Thirty-three percent reported high school graduation as their highest level of education.
4. Approximately 55 percent of respondents reported previous educational programs not related to business. Eighteen percent did not provide a program name.
5. Almost 24 percent of the respondents had completed their previous level of training 16 to 20 years prior to

enrolling in the program, 21 percent had completed their previous education only 1 to 2 years prior to entering the program, while 19 percent reported over 25 years.

6. Previous work experiences were reported by approximately 92 percent of the respondents.

7. Forty-three percent of the respondents were employed, either full or part time, or self-employed just prior to entering the program. Over 18 percent were unemployed or recently laid-off and 15.3 percent were engaged in full time responsibilities at home.

8. Over 44 percent of the respondents were married, with dependents. Twenty-five percent of the respondents were single with no dependents.

9. Approximately 69 percent of respondents indicated the most important reason for attending the program was to develop new skills to obtain immediate employment (55.9%) or for personal use (13.2%). Upgrading previously learned skills, either for immediate employment (11.8%) or for future employment (2.9%) was reported at a rate of over 14 percent. Over 76 percent of the respondents reported multiple reasons for attending the program. Approximately 43 percent reported obtaining a mature high school diploma as a first, second, or third reason for attending the program.

10. Approximately 42 percent of respondents reported the most important reason for attending a high school for

training was no tuition or book charges. Slightly more than 23 percent noted convenient location. Of the sixty-two respondents reporting a second reason, 43.5 percent reported convenient location. Fifty-four of the respondents noted a third reason, convenient hours was reported by 33.3 percent.

11. Respondents reported receiving single and multiple certificates and/or diplomas. Over 76 percent of respondents reported receiving a Business Certificate. Approximately 36 percent reported receiving an Enriched Certificate. Mature High School Diplomas were reported by 43 percent of the respondents.

12. Over 77 percent of respondents who completed Business Certificate requirements attended the program for two (50.8%) or three (26%) semesters. Eighty-eight percent of respondents who completed the Enriched Certificate requirements attended the program for one (64%) or two (24%) semesters.

13. Twenty-eight of the respondents (38.9%) reported experiencing situational, attitudinal/dispositional, or institutional barriers before entering or during the program. Over 78 percent of the first noted barriers were situational. Financial concerns (25%) and home responsibilities (21%) were more frequently reported. Second barriers were reported at a rate of 71 percent. Situational and attitudinal barriers were equally reported. A lack of confidence in abilities was reported at a rate of

40 percent. Third barriers were reported by 35 percent of respondents. Sixty percent of these barriers were situational; however, a lack of confidence in abilities (attitudinal barrier) was noted at a rate of 30 percent. More than three barriers were reported by 21 of the 28 (75%) respondents.

14. Approximately 71 percent of the respondents who identified barriers provided details concerning how they coped or overcame them. Strategies included: reassignment of responsibilities, time management, prioritizing activities, personal determination, support group development, financial budgeting, financial assistance, and employment to alleviate problems experienced.

15. Eighty percent of the respondents reported full or part time employment, as a single activity or in combination with other activities, within the first year of completing the program. Fourteen respondents (19.4%) reported seeking employment as a single activity or along with other activities, nine eventually found employment.

16. Approximately 75 percent of the 61 respondents reporting work activities held clerical, secretarial, reception, accounting, computer, or other office related positions. Almost 10 percent worked in sales positions, while approximately 3 percent were involved in management.

17. Fifty-three of the 61 working respondents (86.9%) reported using the skills and knowledge from the program.

18. Five respondents (6.9%) were involved in continuing education activities during the first year after the program.

19. The most frequently taken courses reported by the respondents were: Office Procedures (91.5%), Data Processing 202 (88.7%), Data Processing 302 (85.9%), Accounting 202 (85.9%), Typing 202/205 (73.2%).

20. Sixty-two respondents identified most useful courses. Five courses receiving a highest 'most useful' rating by these respondents were: Data Processing 302 (73.8%), Typing 302 (71.8%), Executive Secretary 302 (65%), Typing 202/205 (67.3%), and Office Procedures 302 (62.2%).

21. Forty-five respondents identified least useful courses. Five courses receiving the highest 'least useful' rating by these respondents were: Medical Office 305 (44.4%), Legal Office 305 (42.9%), General Business 101 (40.0%), Business Math 305 (31.8%), and Accounting 302 (27.1%).

22. Approximately 63 percent of the 62 respondents providing a 'most useful' course rating noted the reason was the skills were used in their job everyday.

23. Approximately 42 percent of the 45 respondents providing a 'least useful' course rating noted the reason was the skills were not used in their job. Slightly over 11 percent indicated the course was common sense or not new knowledge, 9 percent noted the course was not taught well.

24. The program received an overall rating of average or better by all respondents who completed the question. Eighty-three percent noted a rating of above average or excellent.

25. Over 80 percent of respondents rated quality of instruction, teacher interest/support, time scheduling, and location of program as above average or excellent. A rating of below average or poor was reported by 10 percent of respondents concerning vocational counselling, while 39 percent noted an average rating. Job interview preparation was reported by 11 percent of respondents as below average or poor. Equipment was given an average rating by 42 percent of respondents. An approximately even distribution of ratings between excellent and average were noted with respect to instructional materials and aids and practical application of training.

26. The combining of responses for age categories and first noted reasons for participation revealed: over 70 percent of the 'under 25', 45 to 49, and 50 to 54 age categories enrolled to develop new skills to obtain immediate employment. Sixty percent of the 30 to 34 age group enrolled to upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment.

27. The combining of responses for previous education and first noted reasons for participation revealed: 'develop new skills to obtain immediate employment' was the

highest percentage response in all level of education categories except junior high. For respondents with junior high as the previous education level obtaining a mature high school diploma was highly rated.

28. The combining of responses for age categories and experienced barriers/problems revealed: all age categories experienced barriers or problems. Barriers were reported at a rate of 75 percent or higher for age categories 50 to 54 and 55 and over. Over 57 percent of the 45 to 49 age group reported barriers.

29. The combining of responses for previous education and experienced barriers/problems revealed: approximately 67 percent of respondents with junior high training reported barriers; attitudinal barriers were the first and second most significant barrier identified. Forty-four percent with high school partially completed reported barriers; situational barriers were identified as first and second problems more frequently.

30. The combining of responses for time since previous education and experienced barriers/problems revealed: over 57 percent of respondents in the 'over 25 years' category reported barriers. Approximately 47 percent of respondents in the '16 to 20 years' category reported barriers. Situational barriers were reported more frequently by both groups.

31. The combining of responses for marital/dependent status and experienced barriers/problems revealed: 67 percent of respondents who were separated or divorced with children reported barriers. Situational barriers were reported more frequently.

32. The combining of responses for age categories and overall rating of the program revealed: over 80 percent of the respondents in the 'under 25', 30 to 34, and 35 to 39 age categories reported an excellent or above average rating of the program.

33. The combining of responses for level of education and overall rating of the program revealed: over 80 percent of respondents with junior high, high school partially completed and university reported an excellent or above average rating of the program.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study the following conclusions have been drawn:

1. The majority of the adult high school business program graduates were women who wanted to update or develop new skills in order to obtain immediate employment.

2. The program attracted a variety of individuals. Unemployed, individuals who had at home responsibilities, and employed individuals enrolled in the program.

3. As in previous studies (Cross, 1981), graduates reported multiple reasons for attending the program.

4. A high percentage of graduates were young adults (under 25) or between the age of 40 and 44 when they participated in the program.

5. A high percentage of graduates had completed their previous education only 1 to 2 years, 16 to 20 years, or over 25 years prior to entering the program.

6. The availability of training at no charge was an important factor in choosing to attend a high school for training. Convenient location and hours were also important.

7. The majority of graduates received a Business Certificate, within three semesters.

8. Most barriers/problems identified were situational or attitudinal in nature. Financial concerns, home responsibilities, and lack of confidence were frequently reported problems.

9. Flexibility, determination, and support from others were identified as important in order to overcome barriers/problems.

10. With respect to the relationship between training and employment, the program appeared to be successful in providing skills leading to employment for the majority of graduates within the first year of graduating from the program.

11. The majority of the working graduates were involved in various business office work activities upon

completion of the program.

12. The direct application of skills and knowledge from the program to work appears to be an important factor in determining the usefulness of a course.

13. The most useful courses to graduates were 'skill' oriented courses (ie. computers, software, etc.) used in their jobs.

14. The least useful courses to graduates were general knowledge courses (ie. math, english, etc.) or skills not used in their job.

15. The majority of the graduates were satisfied with the training they received from the program.

16. The quality of vocational counselling should be carefully monitored to ensure participants are provided with appropriate support.

17. Equipment should be updated on a regular basis to ensure they match current business standards.

18. A high percentage of graduates over 45 years of age reported barriers or problems.

19. A high percentage of graduates with previous education below high school graduation reported barriers or problems.

20. A high percentage of graduates with previous education between 6 to 10 years and over 16 years prior to entering the program reported barriers or problems.

21. A high percentage of graduates who were separated or divorced with children reported barriers or problems.

Suggestions for Further Research

The following recommendations for future research are presented as a result of this study:

1. Replication of this study should be completed using other adult high school business programs in order to compare findings and determine the similarities of results.

2. A longitudinal study should be completed following adult business education program participants from entry into the program until one year of post-training activities have been completed. The study may provide more indepth data concerning barriers and how they were overcome or why they were not.

3. Case studies of participants reporting barriers or problems should be undertaken to collect data concerning methods of coping or dealing with problems/barriers.

4. Considering the presence of adults in the high school setting is a relatively new programming consideration, a study investigating the feelings and reactions of administrators, teachers, and 'traditional' age students who are part of this type of programming may provide valuable information to program planners and other researchers.

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APPENDIX A
LETTER OF REQUEST FOR APPROVAL
TO CONDUCT SURVEY

1990 09 27

Mr. T. Carlyle
 Superintendent of Secondary Schools
 St. James-Assiniboia School Division
 2574 Portage Ave.
 Winnipeg, MB

Dear Mr. Carlyle

To complete the requirements for a graduate degree in Education at the University of Manitoba, I wish to conduct a study concerning the adult graduates of business programs at St. James-Assiniboia high schools.

My data will be obtained by mailing a survey to 1987-1989 graduates. More information concerning the study and the survey instrument are included in the attached proposal. My advisor, Dr. George Porozny, may also be contacted.

This study may provide useful evaluative information for the various high schools within the Division, as well as, add to the existing knowledge of adult programs at the high school level. Results will be shared with the various business departments and school administrators as requested.

May I have your permission to conduct this study? If so, please sign, date, and return this letter of permission to me.

Your approval of this study will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

(Ms.) Dawn Hicks
 Graduate Student
 Business Studies Instructor

Enclosures: Proposal

 Signature of Superintendent

Oct. 9/90

 Date

APPENDIX B
FIRST COVER LETTER

[Date]

[Respondent Name and Address]

Dear [Name]:

The attached survey is concerned with the current status and opinions of adult graduates of high school business programs. It is part of a study I am conducting in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Master of Education degree at the University of Manitoba. The results of this study will add to existing knowledge of adult participation in business programs at the high school, as well as provide useful information to program planners considering adult business programs.

YOU have been chosen to be part of a small sample of the graduates to be surveyed. Your opinions are very important to us. The survey should take only 15 minutes to complete.

Please return the completed survey prior to [January 15, 1991 using the stamped, self-addressed envelope enclosed. Analysis of the information cannot be completed until all forms have been returned.

All replies will be held in STRICTEST CONFIDENCE. Anonymity is guaranteed. Your name will be in no way connected to the findings of this important study as data will only be reported in aggregate form. The number placed on the survey will be used ONLY to contact individuals who have not returned their completed survey.

Please accept the mechanical pencil enclosed with your survey as a token of our appreciation for participating in this study. Should you require additional details concerning the study, please contact my advisor, Dr. George Porozny at 474-9014 or myself at the telephone number listed below. Thank you for your cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

Ms. Dawn L. Hicks
Graduate Student
(Work: 888-4867,

Enclosures:

1. Survey
2. Stamped, self-addressed envelope
3. Pen

If you wish to receive a summary of the study results please complete the section below and return with your completed survey.

Yes, I wish to receive a summary of the results of this study. Please send to:

Name _____

Address _____

APPENDIX C
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

SURVEY OF ADULT BUSINESS EDUCATION PROGRAM GRADUATES

=====
 Most of the questions in this survey concern facts about you - before entering, during, and after graduating from the program. Please answer these as best you can from memory. Other questions ask for your opinion. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions; we are interested in what YOU think.

All replies will be held in **STRICTEST CONFIDENCE**

General

- | | | | | |
|----|---|--------------------------------------|----|------------------|
| 1. | Gender (CIRCLE ONE CODE) | | | <u>Code</u> |
| | | Female | 01 | |
| | | Male | 02 | |
| 2. | What was your age at the time you <u>first</u> entered the program?
(CIRCLE ONE CODE) | | | <u>Code</u> |
| | | Under 25 | 01 | |
| | | 25 - 29 | 02 | |
| | | 30 - 34 | 03 | |
| | | 35 - 39 | 04 | |
| | | 40 - 44 | 05 | |
| | | 45 - 49 | 06 | |
| | | 50 - 54 | 07 | |
| | | 55 and over | 08 | |
| 3. | A. What was the HIGHEST level of education you had completed or partially completed <u>before</u> entering the adult business program?
(CIRCLE ONE CODE) | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | <u>Partially</u>
<u>Completed</u> | | <u>Completed</u> |
| | Elementary school (Grade 1-6) | 01 | 02 | |
| | Junior high school (Grade 7-9) | 03 | 04 | |
| | High school: Grade 10 | 05 | 06 | |
| | 11 | 07 | 08 | |
| | 12 | 09 | 10 | |
| | Community College | 11 | 12 | |
| | Private business college | 13 | 14 | |
| | University | 15 | 16 | |
| | Other: (please specify) | 17 | 18 | |
| | | | | |
| | B. What was the name of the program you completed or partially completed? For example: High School Academic | | | |
| | | | | |

3. B. Approximately how long had it been between your highest level of education and entering the Adult Business Program?
(CIRCLE ONE CODE)

	<u>Code</u>
1 - 2 years	01
3 - 5 years	02
6 - 10 years	03
11 - 15 years	04
16 - 20 years	05
21 - 25 years	06
over 25 years	07

4. Did you have any work experience before entering the adult business program? (CIRCLE ONE CODE)

	<u>Code</u>
Yes (Answer #4A)	01
No (Skip to 5)	02

4 A. What type of work experience did you have?
(CIRCLE ONE CODE)

	<u>Code</u>
Business-related only (Skip to 5)	01
Non-business only (Answer #4B)	02
Both business and non-business..... (Answer #4B)	03

4 B. What types of non-business work experiences have you had?
(LIST JOB TITLES OR A DESCRIPTION)

5. What statement(s) would BEST describe your activities just before entering the adult business program?
(CIRCLE ALL APPROPRIATE RESPONSE CODES)

	<u>Code</u>
Employed for wages, full time	01
Employed for wages, part time	02
Recently laid-off	03
Unemployed	04
Attending an educational institution, full time	05
Attending an educational institution, part time	06
Volunteer work	07
Responsibilities at home	08
Retired	09
Other (please explain)	10

6. What statement(s) would BEST describe your status and personal situation just before entering the adult business program?
(CIRCLE ALL APPROPRIATE RESPONSE CODES)

- | | |
|--|-------------|
| | <u>Code</u> |
| 6 A. Single | 01 |
| Married | 02 |
| Separated/divorced | 03 |
| Widowed | 04 |
| Considering a change in marital status | 05 |
| | |
| 6 B. Dependents (any age) at home? | <u>Code</u> |
| Yes(Answer 6 C).... | 06 |
| No(Skip to 7).... | 07 |
| | |
| 6 C. Type of Dependent(s) | <u>Code</u> |
| Children | 08 |
| Relatives | 09 |
| Spouse | 10 |
| Other (please specify) | |
-

Program Participation Information

7. Why did you decide to enrol in the adult business program? IF MORE THAN ONE FACTOR APPLIED, please rank your answers starting with number 1 as MOST important, 2 as next most important, and so on.

- | | |
|---|------|
| | RANK |
| Develop new skills to obtain immediate employment | () |
| Upgrade previously learned skills to obtain immediate employment | () |
| Develop new skills to start my own business | () |
| Upgrade previously learned skills to start my own business | () |
| Develop new skills for personal use | () |
| Upgrade previously learned skills for personal use | () |
| Obtain a Mature High School Diploma for personal satisfaction | () |
| Obtain a Mature High School Diploma required in order to continue education | () |
| To meet new people | () |
| Other (please explain) | () |

8. Why did you decide to attend a high school for your training? IF MORE THAN ONE FACTOR APPLIED, please rank your answers starting with number 1 as MOST important, 2 as next most important, and so on.

RANK

- No tuition or book charges ()
- Other friends were enrolling ()
- Long waiting list at other types of institutions ()
- Convenient location ()
- Training completed in a short period of time ()
- Convenient hours ()
- Familiar/comfortable setting ()
- To test abilities before attempting a higher level of education ()
- Other (please explain) ()

9. A. What type of program(s) did you complete? (CIRCLE CODES)

- | | |
|---|-------------|
| | <u>Code</u> |
| Business Certificate | 01 |
| Mature Graduation Diploma | 02 |
| Enriched Certificate (SCRSS only) | 03 |

B. How many semesters (5-month periods) did you take to complete the program(s)? (CIRCLE ANSWER)

Business Certificate
 No. of Semesters 1 2 3 4
 More (please specify) _____

Enriched Certificate
 No. of Semesters 1 2 3 4
 More (please specify) _____

10. Did you experience any problems or barriers to participating - either before entering or during the program(s)? (CIRCLE CODE)

- | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------|
| | <u>Code</u> |
| Yes(Answer 10 A)..... | 01 |
| No(Skip to 11)..... | 02 |

10. A. What statement(s) would describe the problems or barriers you experienced before entering or during the program(s)? IF YOU EXPERIENCED MORE THAN ONE BARRIER/PROBLEM, please rank your answers starting with number 1 as MOST significant, 2 as next most significant, and so on.

RANK

- Home responsibilities ()
- Not enough time to study or complete work assigned ... ()
- Child care problems ()
- Friends and/or family did not like the idea ()
- Afraid that I was too old to learn ()
- Not confident of my abilities ()
- Don't enjoy studying ()
- Uncomfortable/afraid around high school students ()
- Financial concerns ()
- Not enough energy or stamina ()
- Other (please explain) ()

B. How did you overcome these problems or barriers?

Post-training Activities and Program Evaluation

11. What statement(s) would BEST describe your activities IN THE FIRST YEAR after completing the adult business program? (CIRCLE APPROPRIATE CODES)

- | | <u>Code</u> |
|---|-------------|
| Employed for wages, full time(Answer 11 A)..... | 01 |
| Employed for wages, part time(Answer 11 A)..... | 02 |
| Self-employed(Answer 11 A)..... | 03 |
| Volunteer work(Answer 11 A)..... | 04 |
| Continuing education, full time(Answer 11 B)..... | 05 |
| Continuing education, part time(Answer 11 B)..... | 06 |
| Seeking employment(Answer 11 C)..... | 07 |
| Other (please specify) | 08 |

11. A. What type of work did you do?
(LIST JOB TITLE(S) OR A DESCRIPTION)

Did this work use the skills and knowledge you learned in the adult business program? (CIRCLE CODE)

- | | <u>Code</u> |
|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 01 |
| No | 02 |

GO TO QUESTION 12

B. In what type of continuing education activity did you participate?

Name of Program or Course _____

Name of Institution _____

GO TO QUESTION 12

C. Did you eventually find employment? (CIRCLE CODE)

- | | <u>Code</u> |
|-----------|-------------|
| Yes | 01 |
| No | 02 |

Please explain _____

12. A. What courses did you take during the program(s)?
 B. Of those courses, which ones do you feel were MOST useful to you?
 C. Which ones were LEAST useful?
 (CIRCLE CODES)

<u>Course Name</u>	<u>A. Taken</u>	<u>B. Most Useful</u>	<u>C. Least Useful</u>
Accounting 202	01	01	02
Accounting 302	02	01	02
Business Law 302	03	01	02
Business Math 305	04	01	02
Communications 305	05	01	02
Computerized Accounting 305	06	01	02
Data Processing 202	07	01	02
Data Processing 302	08	01	02
Economics 301	09	01	02
Executive Secretary 305	10	01	02
General Business 101	11	01	02
Office Procedures 302	12	01	02
Typing 102/Keyboarding 105	13	01	02
Typing 202/205	14	01	02
Typing 302	15	01	02
Medical Office 305	16	01	02
Legal Office 305	17	01	02
Math 301	18	01	02
Co-op Ed 305	19	01	02
Other(s) please specify			
_____		01	02
_____		01	02
_____		01	02

D. Why do you feel the courses you have marked were MOST USEFUL?

E. Why do you feel the courses you have marked were LEAST USEFUL?

13. A. Overall, how would you rate the Adult Business Program you participated in? (CIRCLE CODE)

Excellent	Above Average	Average	Below Average	Poor
5	4	3	2	1

- B. Now please rate the following specific aspects of your adult program using the scale shown below:

Excellent	5
Above average	4
Average	3
Below average	2
Poor	1
Not applicable	0

(CIRCLE RATING CODE AT RIGHT)

	<u>E</u>	<u>A</u>	<u>P</u>	<u>N/A</u>		
Quality of instruction	5	4	3	2	1	0
Teacher interest/support	5	4	3	2	1	0
Instructional materials and aids	5	4	3	2	1	0
Vocational counselling	5	4	3	2	1	0
Job interview preparation	5	4	3	2	1	0
Practical application of training to your job .	5	4	3	2	1	0
Providing employability skills	5	4	3	2	1	0
Time scheduling of courses	5	4	3	2	1	0
Equipment	5	4	3	2	1	0
Location of program	5	4	3	2	1	0

14. Please make any additional comments, remarks or suggestions concerning the Adult Business Program.

YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS SURVEY IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!
 IF YOU WISH TO RECEIVE A SUMMARY OF THE STUDY RESULTS PLEASE COMPLETE THE
 ENCLOSED REPLY CARD AND RETURN WITH YOUR SURVEY.
 THANK YOU

APPENDIX D

GRADUATES' COMMENTS TO SURVEY ITEM 10 B--HOW DID YOU
OVERCOME THESE PROBLEMS OR BARRIERS?

Afraid that I was too old to learn, Not confident of my abilities

"Smiled, grinned, cried and with determination got thru."

"I enrolled, with the determination to prove to my children you're never too old to learn, and that if you work hard despite being old and scared to death you can succeed."

"Professional help with doctors. Hard work."

Afraid that I was too old to learn, Not confident of my abilities, Friends and/or family did not like the idea, Financial concerns

"When my children with my husband's backing told me I was too old I got angry and set out to prove them wrong. The oldest two were in Grades 11 and 12 when I started. Only the youngest thought it was a great idea and helped me study. I let the two oldest get part-time employment to satisfy their expensive tastes."

Afraid that I was too old to learn, Not confident of my abilities, Financial concerns, Home responsibilities

"I just got married in January and school in February. My husband had to get used to me studying. A lot of people said I was too old to learn but I proved them wrong. I was scared of hitting the wrong keys on the typewriter and computer but I had to get used to it. With only one wage coming in it was hard but we managed. One of my sons got into trouble and it was hard to carry on but I decided I can't live for my kids and the other one started to skip school so there were rules put down. Everything worked out."

Friends and/or family did not like the idea, Not confident of my abilities

"I was just determined."

Friends and/or family did not like the idea, Financial concerns

"Eventually my husband supported my decision to finish the courses. Financially we learned to manage on what we had."

Home responsibilities

"By staying up later to complete assignments and studying. Also reduced outside activities."

Home responsibilities, Financial concerns

"I had two teenagers at home - one of which was going through a very troubled time. Divided home jobs, cut down spending and for myself I realized I had given my kids their values and if they chose a different road that was their choice and this is what I was going to do (school) for myself and for them."

Home responsibilities, Stressful situations

"I began [the program] at a period in my life that was stressful and it caused a sporadic learning pattern. I eliminated that particular stress that was in my life at that point in time."

Home responsibilities, Child care problems, Friends and/or family did not like the idea

"Determination and good neighbours."

Home responsibilities, Not enough time to study or complete work assigned, Not confident of my abilities, Financial concerns, Afraid that I was too old to learn, Not enough energy or stamina

"Became better organized, part-time employment and budget to deal with finances, gained confidence by working hard, cut out TV watching and entertainment, made friends my own age who were fantastic support group for the myriad of problems encountered, gained self-esteem by striving for best grades."

Attempted too much at once, Not enough time to study or complete work assigned, Not enough energy or stamina, Financial concerns

"I tried to do too much at once. It was probably the hardest five months of my life. I didn't overcome them [problems] - I kept trudging along until I was done."

Not enough time to study or complete work assigned, Home responsibilities

"Too much homework!! Was taking five courses in one semester. Stayed up until 1 am to complete assignments and let husband do most of household tasks."

Not enough time to study or complete work assigned, Full-time work/school

"Very tiring as I worked full-time nights and attended school full-time. I ended up missing a few classes to catch up on my sleep."

Not enough time to study or complete work assigned, Lack of extra help from instructor

"Waited until school finished then stayed late to complete assignments, sometimes having to call work and say 'I can't make it in today'. Teacher was not willing to explain on a one-on-one basis. Talked to another teacher or had other students explain it to me."

Financial concerns

"Worked part-time."

Financial concerns, Home responsibilities, Not enough time to study or complete work assigned

"Worked every weekend. Relied on parents for care of child. No social life."

Financial concerns, Not confident of my abilities, Not enough energy or stamina

"I feel that UIC should sponsor these programs even though they are in a high school. It puts an extra burden on people who try and improve themselves. So I collected student aid for two semesters and worked at evenings for the other two got good marks and kept on studying gave up all outside activities till I was finished."

Difficulty settling down to studying again

"I found that trying to settle down to study was the hardest. I have been out of school since 1971 and forgot how to study. It didn't take long until I had a routine. I really didn't experience any [other] problems or barriers during or before entering the program. I had support from both my family and husband and daughter. We all shared home responsibilities and my daughter was old enough to take care of herself while I studied. If I experienced some type of problems I always discussed it with my family and the communication was always there. That is very important in succeeding. We also had good friends at school who helped each other with their school work. We became almost a 'family unit' who always helped each other and was always there to lend a shoulder. I think adults try very hard to do their best at getting high marks in their subjects and sometimes it gets the best of you. It's nice to have someone to talk to about the stress--whether it's a spouse or classmate. The teachers were excellent and helped us at all times."

Friends and/or family did not like the idea

"Stress, argued a lot. Just kept on until finished."

Not enough time to study or complete work assigned

"Housework suffered."

"Studied after children went to bed."

APPENDIX E

GRADUATES' COMMENTS TO SURVEY ITEM 14--PLEASE MAKE ANY
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS, REMARKS OR SUGGESTIONS CONCERNING THE
ADULT BUSINESS PROGRAM

Positive

"I think its an excellent program, especially for people like myself who are forced back into the work force. The teachers and regular students were great."

"Please continue this program."

"This program is great! If there is an enriched Business program I would like some information forwarded to me."

"I think that the program is an excellent way to learn practical, on-the-job information. I especially benefited from the Co-op program, where I gained work experience and was able to put the knowledge gained in the classroom to real use in a work environment."

"It helped me in a lot of ways to find a job, and when I got a job, the skills I learned helped a lot. If I hadn't taken these courses I would have been lost!"

"I think this is an excellent program and think it helps the adults to further their education and work knowledge."

"It was a very good course and I would recommend it to anyone who was interested."

"This is an excellent and much needed program. It enables individuals without adequate financial resources to acquire necessary training and confidence to obtain employment or further their education in a supportive and friendly atmosphere."

"I very much appreciated being able to take part in this educational upgrading and especially found the computer courses (data processing) very fascinating as I had not been exposed to computers before and was actually afraid of them. It was a very exciting year in my life and I made many new friends. I am currently employed at ... [office employment] and enjoy my work. It's much easier than working in a department store which is what I was doing before."

"I would highly recommend the Adult Business Education program. It was a rewarding experience."

"Enjoyed it immensely. Only wish I had taken it a few years earlier."

"Not enough computers. I thoroughly enjoyed everyday I was at school. It also gave me a great awareness of what my kids were going through as it had been 25 years since I was in school and a great deal had changed."

"My answer to the above question [above average rating of Adult Business Program] is just a guess because I have nothing to compare with. I found the courses good but someone who had been elsewhere may have a different view."

"Excellent program."

"Well worth taking."

"I feel ...[school name] offers a great opportunity to upgrade yourself and the staff support was great. I recommend the courses to people who talk about wanting to go back to school. The courses are very beneficial and getting a job was easy because of the work experience program they have."

"There should be more programs like this in all schools."

Confidence

"Taking the program gave me the confidence to look for employment. I found that although the teachers were good I learned better from ... [one particular teacher's] style of teaching than from the other teachers I had. I also found that, for me, work experience was a total waste of time - all it did was put me week's behind in all of my assignments and thus added a great deal of stress to my life. The work I did during work experience was something I already had experience in so I was more help to them than they were to me."

"I think the Adult Business Program is a great opportunity for adults to return to the work force. The program provided the necessary skills to enable a person to re-enter the work force with confidence. The adult can offer good skills and feel good about themselves knowing they have something to offer regardless of age. I learned a lot from Office Procedures and Executive Secretary in regards to handling any situation that comes about. I am learning something new everyday and I am glad that I decided to take the Adult Business Program."

"Taking this course at ...[school name] was the best thing I have done for myself in years. I enjoyed my 1 1/2 years there very much. I gained a lot of confidence and self-respect. I am employed at a job I never would have applied for before this course. I have recommended this course to any adults I have met that were thinking of going back to school. A few have gone. I hope they find this course as useful as I have. I am very grateful to all the people who

are involved in Adult Business Education and feel it is the best thing to happen to our schools."

"It helped me build more confidence. When I was finished, I knew I could do anything I wanted."

"I learned to be more confident in myself and my ability of the work I do. I also have recommended the program to some very close friends of mine and they have enjoyed it very much."

"For this course I attended ...[school name] and would recommend any adult to do the same. It was an education itself to be in a day-to-day environment with young people. The staff were a pleasure to work with and taking there courses gave me a feeling of confidence in myself which I did not have previously."

"The course was a great confidence builder."

"The program helped me upgrade my skills in order that I could return to the work force after 15 years absence when I stayed home with my children. It gave me confidence and the opportunity to improve my skills and learn computer processing."

Counselling services

"Counselling: I was lucky. I had had counselling at ... [a community college] and knew exactly what I needed. ...[School] counsellors have little knowledge of Business requirements. I told the counsellor my needs."

"Counsellors do not know how to counsel adults. They cause more trouble and work for adult students. Maybe that .[?]. the meaning they didn't want us there making good marks. Don't overlook at beginning of semester the way they do."

Instructors

"One teacher we had would yell at you in front of the class. When you would ask [the teacher] something [the teacher] would yell "Women, women, women". Everyone would look up at you. So I wouldn't ask [the teacher] anything after [the teacher] did that to me once so I ended up asking a classmate to help me."

"It's unfortunate that teachers almost promise a job to you with these skills (eg. [teacher name]), yet in all my eight classes only two people received and took jobs they really

wanted. Two more took jobs just because it was a paying job."

"The reason Quality of Instruction was only [rated] average was because when I attended ...[school name] (1988), they had just begun to implement the business programs [new computer software] and I'm not sure the instructors really knew exactly how to properly teach the required skills."

"The teachers were great."

"Really good program. Some teachers were difficult to work with. It's important to remember adults have 'home' course load as well and they are not little kids."

Other Comments and Suggestions

"Older women should be told before going for an interview to get rid of their gray hair. Regardless of the law about age I was told more often to go back to my kitchen and children or 'if you don't want tell us your age you can't have an interview' or 'Sorry we want someone who isn't family oriented.'"

"Need more on-the-job experience in more than one office to see what you're best suited for. Also to gain experience on different makes of machines and word processors--they all require several days training. It would be a great help if business schools had training programs for word processors - e.g. - Word Perfect, Wang, Xerox, Olivetti, Micom, Panasonic, Multimate, Displaywrite, Sony, also electronic typewriters of all different makes."

"I found that some of the courses moved too slowly and sometimes were were treated too much like children. Some of the classmates liked that but I think the majority didn't. I still can't see the need for attendance when the rest of the class is just doing catch-up. My time is more valuable than that."

"An update of materials and business machines (especially computers) would give students more of an advantage when applying for jobs. Most companies have more updated equipment than the schools. Also update courses."

"With the exception of one teacher I enjoyed learning the subjects I enrolled in from the staff at ...[school name]. It's unfortunate that because of one teacher I would not recommend taking a certain course."

"There should of been a Word Perfect word processing course and more computer time, also to learn the calc pad on computers which I have since been taught thru employment."

"I was in the very first semester of the course [new equipment and software]. Hopefully there have been some improvements. Students should receive some financial support from business - at least bus fare. It should be stressed that students should keep course load low, or hours required to fulfull program be decreased."

"Please try to obtain a better way of employment opportunities in the field the students are trying to get into. In my case I am stuck in a job I was trying to get out of."

"At my attendance time they still had TRS 80's [Radio Shack equipment] and were teaching Scripsit [word processing package] to half of the course which I was unfortunately scheduled for - the rest had Word Perfect - which I was forced to acquire later. My personal feelings were that the one thing the course did not prepare me for was a panel interview and the on-the-job stress of excellence. All jobs quote a certain % of error rate. That's a lie. Only error free will do and the stress of that can be quite overwhelming in the early part of your job and being an excellent proofreader should also be stressed. A course on stress for the mature student could be an asset."

"The one disadvantage of high school is it needs to make allowances for adults re attendance."

"Program time was too fast."

"Adults need to be treated differently than regular students. More information on computer systems needed. Counsellors need to be more specific in help to adults-- look at their specific needs. There was a shortage of computers. The teachers were great."