

Prison Educators' Perceptions of Adult Education in a Prison  
Context

by

Patricia Anne Fox

A thesis  
presented to the University of Manitoba  
in fulfillment of the  
thesis requirement for the degree of  
Master's of Education  
in  
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IN A PRISON CONTEXT

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PATRICIA ANNE FOX

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of  
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## ABSTRACT

This study examines the perceptions of prison educators involved in educational programs at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary between September, 1985 and May, 1987. Open-ended interviews were conducted with university professors, vocational instructors, and academic educators to determine if the prison environment and clientele permit the practice of the adult education principles concerning the learning environment and sharing the learning process. The research investigates the opinions, beliefs and attitudes held by the prison educators. The data show that the influences on teaching within prison is relative to each educational group investigated. The university professors were influenced by the small class sizes and the lack of library references available to the prisoners. The vocational instructors were guided by the requirements stipulated by the Manitoba Apprenticeship Board as to curriculum planning and implementation. In addition, vocational programs in motor mechanics are restricted with regard to the vehicles that can be used. Academic educators work with a clientele that demonstrates academic achievement levels ranging from illiteracy to university degrees. All of the educators perceived that many of the prisoners

demonstrate poor socialization skills and low self-esteem. Only two out of the ten prison educators interviewed had undertaken formal studies related to adult education. Institutional workings and procedures have priority over all educational programs. Findings suggest that prison educators at Stony Mountain, although committed to their profession, neither know nor practice the principles of adult education which have been advocated in official Canadian prison investigations since 1936.

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For "Ailee"

with love and appreciation...

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Chapter I  
INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Studies in the area of prison education generally deal with either the educational characteristics of prisoners or descriptions of the types of programs that are being offered in prison institutions (Bouliane, 1985; Dell'Apa, 1973; Forster, 1981; Gold, 1983; Grainge & Kemp, 1981; Kidd, 1981; Lee, 1973; MacCormick, 1932; Shea, 1980). Research related to problems concerning either the teaching of prisoners within a prison environment or the implementation of adult education principles in prisons is rare (Bouliane and Meunier, 1986). This lack of research is due in part to the prevalence of certain assumptions concerning the purpose and function of prisons. Fitzgerald (1977) writes that traditionally the primary function of prisons was seen as punishment in conjunction with deterrence, the protection of society and security. As a result, these dominating assumptions regarding the purpose of prisons overshadowed the rehabilitative intent of education for prisoners. Furthermore, the impetus of research in the area of prison

education was subsequently undermined. This notion is particularly evident with regard to teacher training programs for prison educators. They were difficult to justify because the overriding attitude toward education in prisons was one of indifference. Education was perceived to be a privilege and it was held that prisoners should be punished (Bouliane and Meunier, 1986; Fitzgerald, 1977; 1986; Fox, 1986; MacCormick, 1932).

As society was dominated by the notion that prisoners must be punished for their offences, research related to prison education focussed primarily on the prisoner. This research involved investigations as to prisoner educational characteristics, class participation numbers and their attitudes toward education (Dell'Apa, 1973; Forster, 1981; Gold, 1981; Ontario Institute for Studies in Education [O.I.S.E], 1979). However, research concerning problems associated with teaching prisoners, and in particular, the prison educators' perceptions of the implementation of the adult education principles dealing with classroom dynamics, teacher/student interaction, delivery systems, learning environments and teaching strategies is scarce. An additional explanation for this lack of research concerning teaching in prisons, particularly data related to those problems that are common to prison educators, or innovative teaching strategies in a prison environment, is that perceptions of the prison educators are taken for granted.

This is in respect of the influence of societal attitudes towards prisons and prisoners in general. This observation is supported by Fitzgerald (1977), who argues that the greatest barrier to prisoner rehabilitation is the negative attitude held by society toward prisoners. In addition, Shea (1980) reports that the prevalent societal attitude is that prisoners should be punished for their wrongdoing. Society has become used to the notion of punishment for prisoners and as a result, prison education programs are viewed as a reward, not as a means of rehabilitation (Fox, 1986). This general lack of awareness regarding teaching in prisons has left many individuals and authorities ignorant of the problems experienced in teaching prisoners.

Teaching prisoners can be problematic in many areas. Identifying the problems and concerns perceived by the prison educators when teaching in the prison environment can provide greater understanding, appreciation, and enlightenment for society when justifying prison education programs. The prison educator's comments, insights, considerations and attitudes with regard to working in a prison setting can be presented in such a way that the seemingly rigid societal attitude of punishment for prisoners can diminish. In addition, more awareness and understanding of the benefits of prison education programs based on the notion of rehabilitation will prevail.

Advocating rehabilitation for prisoners through education is based on preparing the prisoner to return to society (Duguid, 1981; Fox, 1986). Historically, the education programs in Canada's prisons were founded on the principles of adult education. However, recognizing the importance of adult education within a prison context is subject to criticism. This criticism is based on the many inferences and interpretations of the broad concept of adult education (Brookfield, 1986). For example, adult education can be associated with university courses or community recreation programs.

Since 1936, adult education has been recognized as an important consideration within prison education programs in Canada. At this time, a Royal Commission to inquire and report upon the penal system specified the provision of an adult education program structured to meet the needs, interests, and abilities, on an individual basis of the potential student body (Weir in Roberts, 1973; Owens, 1985). Subsequent commissions and reports on penal conditions in Canada in 1947 (Gibson Report on the Archambault Commission of 1936), in 1956 (Fauteaux Royal Commission on the Conditions of Federal Penitentiaries in Canada), and 1979 (Report to the Solicitor General of Canada on Prison Education programs) encouraged and recommended that the principles of adult education be implemented in prison education programs. However, although Canada had provided

guidelines and recommendations for this implementation, their practice within prison institutions seems to have been grossly overlooked. The findings of the 1947 Gibson report on the Archambault Royal Commission into penal services, along with more recent studies support this observation. Weir (in Roberts, 1973) mentions that Gibson found that education programs offered in federal penitentiaries throughout Canada were disorganized and lacked any direction or focus. He concluded that education was seen by prison authorities as an activity to preoccupy the inmates. Further investigations in 1956, the Fauteaux Commission, and in 1979, the Report to the Solicitor General of Canada on Canadian prison education programs, established that education in Canada's federal prisons was inadequate. The 1956 Fauteaux Royal Commission concluded that education programs in federal penitentiaries were not organized, and those programs being offered were perfunctory in essence, offering little if any real assistance to inmates (Owens, 1985). O.I.S.E (1979) made 106 recommendations regarding prison education programs, many of which were based on the principles of adult education. In the past decade, there have been several arguments that the principles of adult education must be applied to prison education programs (Ayers, 1981b; Bouliane, 1985; Bouliane and Meunier 1986; Duguid, 1981; Fox, 1986; O.I.S.E., 1979; Shea, 1980).

Arguments for the advancement of the principles of adult education within prison education programs go beyond the historical recommendations and reports; they are also based on the obvious notion that prisoners are adults with adult needs and wants. These needs and wants can be associated with adjusting to prison life, or with wanting to do something that may benefit them during their confinement (Scrivastave, 1985). The needs of the adult prisoners may be varied and individualistic in nature. Some prisoners may need assistance in adjusting to imprisonment, in dealing with such restrictions of the environment as a lack of privacy, and in relating to fellow prisoners (Duguid, 1979). For many inmates alienation from their families and loved ones places added strain on their situation. In most prisons visits from family or friends are restricted to one meeting per month. Because of this lack of exposure to news from home many prisoners rely on letters for "keeping in touch". However, Gold (1983) after surveying federal prisons in America concludes that close to 80% of prisoners have difficulty with reading and writing. This inability to read or write can either make prisoners actively seek literacy skills for communicating with their family, or cause them to become more frustrated. This frustration can be exacerbated in respect of the prison environment and restrictions.

Prisoners face a regimented, institutionally structured timetable whereby the monotony of institutional life becomes predictable, calculated, and uneventful (Bouliane, 1985; Glaser in Roberts, 1973). It is because of this routine existence that justification for the implementation of adult education in a prison context becomes more evident. The justification is based on both internal and external perspectives. The external considerations deal with the day to day workings of the institution, that is timetabling classes provides a basis for structuring the prisoner's activities. Internal justifications for adult education in prison relate to the needs of each individual prisoner. This may include alleviating their sense of boredom or providing a challenge to their abilities. Adult education can act as a stimulus for their self-esteem and self-concept, and can direct them to a sense of understanding and purpose (Ayers, 1981; Bouliane, 1985; Burkey, 1981; Nelson and Hockema, 1981).

The principles of adult education were formalized by Knowles (1980) and have provided a foundation for many researchers in the field who have modified them because of either their learners' needs or because of specific conditions in the organization that is hosting the adult education program. The adult education principles are founded on certain assumptions about adult learning and teaching. Knowles (1980) writes that the critical element

in any adult education program is what happens when a teacher comes face-to-face with a group of learners. Three assumptions about learning and teaching are (a) adults can learn, (b) learning is an internal process and, (c) there are superior conditions of learning and principles of teaching. It is this latter assumption about adult teaching and learning that provides a foundation for the principles of adult education. Knowles (1980) contends that the processes of adult learning involves certain conditions of learning that are more conducive to growth and development than others. These superior conditions seem to be produced by practices in the learning teaching transaction that adhere to certain principles of teaching. The principles of adult education according to Knowles (1980) are contained in the following Table.

Table 1

Principles of Adult Learning and Teaching.

Learning	Teaching
1. Learners feel a need to learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Teacher exposes the learners to new possibilities and fulfillment.</li> <li>* Teacher helps the learners to clarify their aspirations.</li> <li>* Teacher assists the learner to recognize the gap between their aspirations and present level.</li> <li>* Teacher helps the learners identify the problems they experience because of the gaps.</li> </ul>
2. Learning environment is characterised by comfort, trust, respect, helpfulness, freedom of expression and, differences.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Provision of physical conditions that are comfortable and conducive to interaction.</li> <li>* Accepting the learners as persons of worth and respects their feelings and ideas.</li> <li>* Seeks to build relationships of trust and helpfulness. Encourages co-operative activities.</li> <li>* Contributes resources as a co-learner for mutual enquiry.</li> </ul>
3. Learners perceive the goals of learning to be theirs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Involves the learners in mutual process in formulating learning objectives.</li> </ul>
4. Learners accept a share of responsibility for planning and operating learning experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Shares thinking about options in designing of learning and selection of materials and methods that involves the learners</li> </ul>
5. Learners actively participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Teachers helps the learners to organize themselves for sharing mutual enquiry.</li> </ul>
6. Learning is related to the learner's experience.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Help the learners use their own experiences as resources for learning.</li> <li>* Gears presentation to the experience levels of the</li> </ul>

7. Learners have a sense of progress toward their goals

- learners.
- \* Helps the learners to apply new learnings to their experience.
  - \* Involves the learners in mutually determined measures for evaluation.
  - \* Helps the learners develop and apply self-evaluation based on these criteria.

(Adapted from Knowles, 1980. p. 57-58)

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Brookfield (1986) writes that what has become clear in the study of the concept of adult education is that it is not at all fixed or immutable, as some might believe. This notion of flexibility can benefit each individual learner and also assist prison educators in light of the variance of the academic needs of each prisoner. In addition, the adult education principles can be of assistance to the prison educators by enhancing their teaching skills for working with adults in a unique environment.

Given that prisoners and the prison institution offer prison educators unique challenges in relation to the restrictions of the environment and the academic characteristics of the prisoners, it can be argued that the guidelines and principles offered by Knowles (1980) will assist the prison educators to meet these challenges. This notion could answer the criticism that prison educators lack training as purported by Hudson (1981). He argues that many

teachers are not prepared for working with prisoners because they have not been exposed to training techniques for working with this unique clientele in a special environment. Furthermore, O.I.S.E. (1979) concludes that the nature of prisons requires that prison educators have opportunities to participate in teacher training programs geared to this unique world. The report reveals that there are no training programs in Canada designed to prepare teachers for the special tasks involved in prison education. Hence, the problem of a unique population needing specially trained education personnel exists. The necessity for the implementation of the adult education principles in prison education programs is warranted because they are beneficial in guiding prison educators when working with the adult prisoner population. Bouliane (1985) suggests that as prisoners have demonstrated specific and unique needs, needs to which the principles of adult education attempt to cater, the rationale for adult education in a prison context becomes evident. However, the needs of prisoners are individualistic and vary significantly.

The variance in prisoner needs is influenced by their negative attitudes towards education. This is primarily due to their previous educational experiences, as reported in research by Gold (1983), Grainge and Kemp (1981), O.I.S.E (1979) and Roberts (1968). Awareness of each prisoners' attitude towards education can influence how an educator

chooses to work with them, or they can induce negative attitudes towards the prisoners in general. Understanding and implementing the adult education principles can alleviate the negative attitudes that may have emerged and can provide necessary guidelines for teaching each prisoner. However, such implementation will be difficult.

Because of the restrictions and limitations of the prison environment, the implementation of the adult education principle which deals with providing a conducive environment to learning can be impeded. Knowles (1980) suggests that a conducive learning environment is characterized by the teacher providing comfortable physical conditions. Also, the teacher attempts to provide an atmosphere of trust and helpfulness and contributes resources in the spirit of mutual inquiry.

The prison educators' perceptions with regard to their responsibility of providing a conducive learning environment are that it may be impossible in relation to the limitations of the institution. The buildings are characterized by bars, locks, and guards. The nature of prisons and their obvious physical restrictions which include bars on the classroom windows, the prisoners not being permitted to move from one area to another and, the constant surveillance and checking by the guards, do not allow for the provision of a relaxed, informal learning environment.

The restrictions of the prison institution place obvious constraints on providing a conducive learning environment. Other elements which can affect the nature of the learning environment are the attitudes, behaviours, and previous educational experiences of the prisoners. Duguid (1979) reports that many prisoners have previously failed in education which can affect their present attitude toward learning. Finally, the everyday workings of the institution can also affect the learning environment. Prisoners are often called to attend to lawyer or family visits, judiciary requirements involving either parole hearings or court appearances, and punishment procedures which can include solitary confinement or the withdrawal of some privileges.

The adult education principle of sharing responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience may also be very difficult to implement in prisons. This principle is characterized by the teacher sharing his or her thinking about options available in designing the learning experiences and the selection of materials and methods. It involves the learners in deciding among those options jointly (Knowles, 1980). The teacher also assists the learners to organize themselves to share in the process of mutual inquiry. The difficulties perceived in implementing the principle of sharing the learning process can be due in part to the prisoners' previous educational experiences and attainment levels. Additional influences involve the

variance and multiplicity of the educational needs and attitudes held by most prisoners. Some prisoners may demonstrate major problems in educational classes, for example, illiteracy. This would lead to a perception that the prison educator maintain full responsibility for the learning process. Further perceptions regarding sharing the learning process are that prison educators can perceive that because of a poor educational record, a prisoner may not be interested in pursuing any educational programs. This may result in the prison educator perceiving that his/her role is central and authoritarian in the learning situation, and that he or she is responsible for the planning and implementation of all educational programs.

#### 1.1.1 Purpose of the Study

In the past, through the process of Royal Commissions and reports to the Solicitor General of Canada recommendations that education programs in a prison context be based on the principles of adult education have been advocated. However, even though much of the recent research in prison education continues to advocate that the principles of adult education be implemented in prison education programs, it appears that there may be some difficulty in incorporating the principles of adult education into a prison environment. Determining if there is any difficulty in teaching in a prison

environment and exactly what the difficulties are can be researched in many different ways. The purpose of this study is to undertake a qualitative investigation with prison educators from the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary to establish how the prison educators have difficulties implementing two of Knowles' (1980) seven principles of adult education. The principles in question are:

(1) The establishment of an environment conducive to learning and sharing the learning process. The ideal learning environment is characterized by physical comfort, mutual trust and respect, mutual helpfulness, freedom of expression, and acceptance of differences.

(2) Sharing the learning process. This involves the learners' acceptance of a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience, and therefore having a commitment to it.

This study also considered whether the adopted teaching strategies, that is those actions and behaviours reported by the prison educators, were compatible with these two principles.

### 1.1.2 Research Questions

Research in prison education indicates that teaching programs are influenced by both the levels of educational experience held by the inmates, and the physical environment of the prison (Corcoran, 1984). In addition, Forster (1981) and Hudson (1981) suggest that many prison educators are not trained to work with these unique clients in a unique environment. When working with adults, attempts must be made to foster a comfortable and supportive learning environment (Brookfield, 1986; Council for Continuing Education; 1984; Knowles, 1980). However, because of the physical limitations of the prison institution and the purpose of prisons being predisposed to security, deterrence, and punishment, these conditions may not allow for the implementation of the adult education principle of providing a conducive, comfortable, supportive learning environment. In addition, many prisoners have negative attitudes toward and experiences with education. Therefore, sharing responsibility for learning experiences may be difficult to implement. Consequently, it was necessary to establish:

1. What strategies are used by prison educators to ascertain the prisoner's attitudes towards and experiences with education?

2. How does the prison environment affect the implementation of the adult education principle of providing a learning environment that is comfortable, supportive, and conducive to learning?

The principle of encouraging learners to share responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience breaks from the traditional understanding of the teacher being solely responsible for the learning process (Knowles, 1980). It has also been reported that many adult learners, due to their previous learning experiences, expect the role of the teacher to be central and authoritarian (Knowles, 1980; Darkenwald and Merriam, 1984). Therefore, it was important to consider:

3. What methods do the prison educators use when implementing strategies relevant to the learner's sharing responsibility for planning and working through the learning process?

### 1.1.3 Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study the following definitions were used:

Adult Education - The following definition put forward by Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) will be used, "Adult education is the process whereby persons whose major social roles are characteristic of adult status undertake

systematic and sustained learning activities for the purposes of bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes, values or skills" (p.3).

Conducive learning environment - Knowles' (1980) characteristics of a conducive learning environment were used in this study. They include: the environment is physically comfortable; the learners are accepted as people of worth whose ideas and feelings are to be respected; relationships are built on trust and helpfulness; and there is co-operation in the process of learning.

Prisoners - Since this study is focussing on a Federal institution, prisoners will refer to those individuals who face confinement for at least a minimum of 2 years.

Prison Education - Education carried out in the prison setting. It may include, academic, vocational, remedial and socialization programs.

Sharing the learning process - The principle involves sharing the thinking of options for learning, evaluation, learning materials and teaching strategies to be used with the learners (Knowles, 1980).

Teacher Perceptions - Intuitive, mental awareness of the learning environment based on the teacher's involvement and observations of the learning environment.

Teaching Style - Actions or behaviours demonstrated in the teaching environment to facilitate learning.

#### 1.1.4 Limitations of the Study

This study investigated two adult education principles used by prison educators at the Stony Mountain Medium/Maximum federal penitentiary, located in Manitoba, Canada. The two principles are (a) an environment conducive to learning and, (b) sharing the learning process. These specific principles were investigated in light of the restrictive nature of the prison environment and the diversity of the educational characteristics and needs of prisoners.

The study is a review of ten prison educator's perceptions of the adult education principles pertaining to the learning environment and the sharing of the learning process practiced at the Stony Mountain Institution. The perceptions may be biased in relation to the interviewing process and because of the obvious limitations associated with the implementation of the principles in a prison context.

Furthermore, the prison educators at this institution are vocational instructors, university professors, and academic teachers. Because there are three separate categories of educational personnel involved in educational programs at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary, the results may only be applicable to that particular category. That is,

professor perceptions may only be applicable to the university professors and not to the vocational instructors.

#### 1.1.5 Organization of the Thesis

The thesis consists of six chapters. Chapter One presents the introduction, background information concerning prison education in Canada, rationale for the purpose of the study, the research questions to be investigated, and the limitations of the study. Chapter Two contains a review of pertinent literature. Chapter Three presents the design of the study which includes data collection, description of the population, and the sources of information. Chapter Four presents the data results which substantiate those adult education principles dealing with sharing a responsibility for learning and the learning environment at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. Chapter Five presents the analysis of the data. This involves the presentation of themes and/or issues arising from the interviews. Chapter Six presents the conclusions of the study, with recommendations based on the issues that emerged from the research. Implications for further research are also presented.

## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

From an historical perspective, education in Canadian federal penitentiaries has been recognized since 1879. Weir (in Roberts, 1973) notes that in 1879 Canada published the Justice Minister's Report of Penitentiaries. Prison education at this particular time included the adherence to the rules and regulations of the prisons, together with the enforcement of strict discipline. Only those convicts noted for good behaviour after three months confinement were permitted to take classes. The opportunity to attend school was considered one of the highest rewards that could be bestowed on convicts, as it withdrew them from the work gangs and was believed by prison authorities to be necessary for "spiritual development and enlightenment" (Weir, 1973). Owens (1985) writes that during the 19th century, prison education was concerned with spiritual development and that classes were the responsibility of the prison chaplain. At this time, because of the dominance of religion in prison education programs, problems with the perfunctory and elementary levels of education offered to the prisoners, in conjunction with the small number of participants in programs began to arise. However, these problems were not addressed officially until the 1930's.

In 1932, A.H. MacCormick wrote The Education of Adult Prisoners. After surveying over 200 penal institutions throughout the United States of America, MacCormick produced a definitive exposition on prisons, together with a rationale for the need for education programs for adult prisoners. It was MacCormick who introduced the notion of adult education in the prison context by suggesting that education for prisoners must be "adultized". His premise was based on prisoners being adults, with adult interests, concepts and experiences. The argument for education to be "adultized" came to Canada four years later. The Archambault Royal Commission (1936) recommended a complete re-organization of the educational system in Canadian federal penitentiaries. It proposed a well rounded program based on the principles of adult education: "Education programs are to be structured to meet the needs, interests, and abilities on an individual basis of the potential student body, the majority of whom were found to be academically undereducated, vocationally unskilled, and culturally deprived" (cited by Weir, p.43 in Roberts, 1973).

The recommendations from the 1936 Archambault Royal Commission led to Canada being seen as a world leader in recognizing the educational and cultural deprivations of prisoners. However, in 1947 General Gibson reported that the extent to which the Archambault (1936) recommendations had been implemented was minimal (Bouliane, 1985). Gibson's

(1947) findings were later verified in 1956, when Canada undertook another major investigation into its prisons.

The Fauteux Royal Commission on the Canadian Penal Services (1956) expressed dissatisfaction with prison conditions. During this period, education was recognized as one of the major disciplines used in the total correctional process. However, gross deficiencies in implementing and organizing classes prevailed. The Fauteux Royal Commission (1956) stressed the necessity "to provide programs of adult education that would contribute to the maturation of those inmates exposed to it, provide programs of vocational training designed to teach the occupational skills required to compete in the labor market, and while so doing, hopefully bring about changes in behaviours and attitude to the extent that substantial numbers of inmates who enter federal institutions each year would avoid wasting the remainder of their lives in the shadow world of the criminal" (Weir p.45, in Roberts, 1973).

The recommendations made by the Fauteux Royal Commission (1956) concerning prison education programs did not appear to have been applied within Canadian federal penitentiaries, as was reported by the 1977 Report of the House of Commons. The report commented substantially on education programs provided in prison institutions and at this time the existing programs were severely criticized. The criticism

was based on the argument that over the years education had been seen as a time filling activity. Its main purpose was to relieve boredom or to provide basic skill training for employment. However, the curriculum and the qualifications of the instructors were found wanting (Bouliane, 1985).

The 1977 Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs found that Canadian federal prison educators lacked sufficient teacher training and that in many institutions, the educational curriculum was aimed at alleviating prisoner monotony. In order to deal with the problem, the Adult Education Department of O.I.S.E. was given a mandate by the Solicitor General to study the state of education in Canadian federal prisons, and to make recommendations for improvements to the existing educational programs. Bouliane (1985) notes that O.I.S.E. (1979) made 106 specific recommendations among which were to raise funds allocated for education, to operate all programs based on the principles of adult education, to co-ordinate programs with provincial education authorities, and where necessary, to follow the directions and regulations of the provincial education authorities.

Historically it can be seen that Canada has made numerous and substantive investigations concerning adult education and its role in prisons. A major criticism is that, although recognition and recommendations have come forth,

the Canadian prison authorities have been slow or did not attempt to put the recommendations into practice.

Before it is possible to discuss the implementation of the principles of adult education in a prison context, it is important to have an understanding of the nature of prisons. Shea (1980) argues that many objectives and goals are most difficult to achieve in prison because of the influence of the intent and philosophy of prisons. There is no use talking about theories of adult education unless one understands the nature of prisons.

## 2.1 THE PURPOSE OF PRISONS

Traditionally the prison institution has been viewed as the place where criminals are sent to be punished. Glaser (in Roberts, 1973) suggests that the fear of punishment was supposed to reform the convicted offender and act as a deterrent for other would-be offenders. Roberts(1973) notes that historically, dealing with criminals has been based on the three R's: revenge, restraint and reformation. The overriding understanding of the purpose of prisons is to punish. However, some researchers suggest that there are additional purposes.

The notions of punishment and deterrence in addition to the protection of society extend the roles of the prison as

advocated by Fitzgerald (1977). Elaborating on these roles Gordon (1973) writes that the need to protect society is based on indications that roughly half of the inmates return to prison eventually, as more than 80% of what is considered "serious crime" is committed by repeaters. The objectives of deterrence and punishment are somewhat self explanatory. Fitzgerald (1977) suggests that deterrence is based on the idea that if certain acts are followed by a great deal of unpleasantness, there is a strong chance that people will refrain from such acts, and that punishment is the 'raison d'etre' of prison. It is a very basic idea that people must 'pay' for their wrong doing. The role of rehabilitation has emerged only recently.

The early 20th century according to Glaser (in Roberts, 1973) is the period when a fourth "R" as a purpose of prisons was introduced: rehabilitation. Fitzgerald (1977) argues that rehabilitation is a modern function of prisons seen as a necessary replacement of the gallows, and as a necessary consideration in respect of constant and increasing prisoner populations. However, Glaser (in Roberts, 1973) suggests the format, intent, and purpose of rehabilitation offered great promise for the present and future re-socialization of the offender. The intent of the rehabilitative process was primarily based on humanistic values.

The objective of rehabilitation in prisons involves improving the individual so as to enable his/her return to society to lead a good and useful life (Duguid, 1981; Foster, 1981; Fox, 1986). Many researchers argue that education is an appropriate vehicle for restoring a prisoner back into society as the theoretical assumption behind all the education programs is that if becoming a criminal is primarily a learning process, so too is the remaking of useful citizens (Corcoran, 1984). This premise is rationalized by MacCormick (1932) who writes that the tools of education, while no guarantee of good character and appropriate non-criminal behaviour, are a powerful aid for forming or transforming criminality; the education of prisoners offers one of the very real hopes for their rehabilitation. Based on this position, the purpose of imprisonment according to Hudson (1981) is not so much to punish the offender but to rehabilitate him/her from his/her propensity for crime through education.

Although arguments for education as a rehabilitative strategy for prisoners is recognized by many practitioners and government authorities, Corcoran (1984) and Fox (1986) suggest that society continues to maintain the attitude that prisoners must be punished. There is no doubt that society in general is ignorant of the rehabilitative procedures and purposes of education programs within prisons. This lack of knowledge is exploited through ill-informed newspaper

articles which use sensationalizing tactics when reporting on prisons or prisoners. This adverse publicity perpetuates the notion that prisoners must be punished (Roberts, 1968). But society can play a significant role in prisoner rehabilitation. O.I.S.E. (1979) reports that as a society we set a very high value on the freedom of the individual. The inmate is deprived of this freedom through incarceration, and from that deprivation flow all of the negative aspects of prison life. One such negative aspect is time. Shea (1980) suggests that time is the main preoccupation for inmates. The impact and influence of time within the institution can have immeasurable effects on a prisoner's adjustment to the day to day functions of the prison environment.

## 2.2 THE PRISON ENVIRONMENT'S EFFECT ON LEARNING

Fitzgerald (1977) writes that prisons were built with one intention, security. Prisoners are considered risky and untrustworthy in society and as a consequence, they are withdrawn from society and placed in prison for punishment in order to make society safe. Ayers (1981b) supports Fitzgerald in his claim that the aim of prisons appears to be pragmatic custody and control. This notion leads to problems arising with regards to the provision of a conducive learning environment. Furthermore, Bouliane (1985)

reports that the massive walls, bars, fences, and gun towers do not provide a very happy atmosphere for learning.

Providing an atmosphere for learning based on Knowles' (1980) principles of adult education is the responsibility of prison educators, and Jepson (in Forster, 1981) suggests that the prison environment plays a major role in respect of its territorial delineations and boundaries. The boundaries can affect the teacher when attempting to establish relationships with both prisoners and officials. Elaborating on the issue of the prison environment and its effects on teachers, Corcoran (1984) writes that the most urgent problem for the teacher is coping with the stresses caused by the prison security system. The prison educator must learn to deal with the electronic gates, the surveillance cameras, the bars, and the restrictions.

Obviously the physical attributes of the prison environment can influence the atmosphere for learning. Shea (1980) argues that prisons are closed and abnormal environments where sensory deprivation and monotony are a way of life. Furthermore, learning and growth are adversely affected by a lack of enrichment in the prisoner's daily life. Kendall (in Roberts, 1973) writes that the setting is the most obvious difference between prison education and public education. It can be summed up as bars versus open doors and windows.

It is obvious environmental security influences are a major deterrance to education within the prison. This observation is supported by Burger (1972) who concludes that although rehabilitation of criminals is presumably the major purpose of prison institutions, the custody of criminals is actually its major task. Too many present day prisons stress punishment instead of rehabilitation. Furthermore, Bouliane (1985) suggests that security is the overriding preoccupation in prisons. Virtually everything else, including education, is secondary. The inmates, regimented and under constant close supervision, are treated more like recalcitrant adolescents than adults. Not only have they lost their freedom, but they have also lost the right to make many decisions that others take for granted.

The deprivation of many rights and privileges together with the restrictive, depressing environment can affect a prisoner's attitude toward the institution and his/her willingness to pursue rehabilitative programs such as education. It is necessary therefore to appreciate those behaviours and attitudes which are commonly held by many prisoners. This awareness provides prison educators with a greater understanding of those influences which can affect a prisoner in the educational setting.

### 2.3 PRISONER BEHAVIOURS AND ATTITUDES TOWARD EDUCATION

Developing a desire to "get out and never come back" leads some prisoners to rationalize the necessity for skill acquisition in a selected educational program so as to compete for jobs upon release. Hence the goals of learning are theirs, and they progress toward their goals by participating actively in the learning process (Fitzgerald, 1977). Many prisoners, because of their previous educational or occupational experiences are influenced to choose learning pursuits with which they are familiar (Duguid, 1979; Gold, 1983; and Grainge and Kemp, 1981; MacCormick, 1932); for example, some prisoners have worked in occupations which coincide with the vocational programs offered in prisons. They choose these classes to either maintain or upgrade their skills. Another reason for selecting a familiar course is the fear of exposure of their weaknesses. Prisoners perceive that this exposure can lead to teasing from other inmates, and can affect their status or confidence within the prison environment (Shea, 1980). As a result a prisoner's previous educational achievements can significantly affect his/her attitude and reasons for choosing to participate or not to participate in education programs. This problem can be overcome if a policy of sharing the learning process is adopted.

The adult education principle concerning sharing the learning process can allow prisoners to explore other courses or programs by broadening their attitude and understanding of education and its function. This is achieved through discussions, inquiry and explanations as to the purpose, intent and benefits to be gained from education programs. This information could perhaps stimulate prisoners to venture into a new or less familiar area of interest. As a consequence, his/her self-confidence and self-esteem can increase.

Every prisoner's behaviours and attitudes toward education is unique. They are based on their life history, development and maturation. Prisoners' views and attitudes toward education can be determined by examining numerous external and internal influences. A number of prisoners hold a negative attitude toward education because they perceive it to be a method of control. Roberts (1968) writes that prisoners view the conformity in education as being aligned to the conformity they have rejected in society; hence, many see education as contemptible. This is supported by Nelson and Hockema (1981) who suggest that prisoners are resistant to teaching, which they see as essentially the teaching of middle class norms, the norms of their oppressors. The notion of education being perceived as a form of control is also discussed by Jepson (in Forster, 1981). He concludes that prisoners believe the aim

of education is control, whereas the prison authorities simply want to give the prisoners something to do.

For many prisoners the negative attitude toward education can in part be due to their previous educational experiences. Approximately 80% of prisoners have educational records which indicate failure (Dell'Apa, 1973; Gold, 1983; Grainge and Kemp, 1981). The impact of the failure according to Grainge and Kemp (in Forster, 1981) is that anyone who has failed at school and is caught breaking the law is often reluctant to open himself to the possibility of failing yet again in education. In addition, O.I.S.E. (1979) makes reference to the high concentration of individuals in prison who have in some way "failed" at school. The report suggests that choosing education may be met with relief at having another chance, or it may be avoided and viewed with hostility. Some prisoners perceive education as control; others fear education because it could expose them to more failure.

Additional prisoner behaviours concerning education emanate from their interpersonal skills. Roberts (1968) and Goldin and Thomas (1984) report the existence of negative interaction processes by prisoners. This is demonstrated by teasing and taunting their fellow inmates. Roberts (1968) contends that the stigma of failure carries over from past experiences into present programs. Prisoners are aware

that if their failure becomes known they will suffer a drop in their social status, and be the butt for jibes from others. In addition, Goldin and Thomas (1984) in their observations of a prison class reported that when one student responded to a teacher's question, indicating he had read for the class, many others started berating and threatening the student. As a result, a potentially volatile situation arose and the responding student became distraught. The student intended to drop the class but was persuaded to remain. It was reported that he no longer participated in class discussions.

Teasing and disruptive behaviours demonstrated by prisoners may be aligned to their personality and experiences. However, Forster (1981) and Johnson (in Roberts, 1973) suggest that disruptive and teasing behaviours attempt to alleviate the boredom of 'surviving' a long sentence, or the teasing presents an opportunity for variety within a drab and monotonous existence. It is held that the disruptive behaviour relieves the stress associated with the prison environment. In attempting to explain reasons for specific prisoner behaviours Roberts (1968) suggests that many prisoners have inadequate personalities and are dependent on others for information. Unsure of whom to approach, fearful of ridicule and contempt, some prisoners retire behind the sullen image they erect for protection and regard the prison world with suspicion. Demonstrations of indifference and moodiness are common.

Most prisoners show their attitudes toward education through their moods. Many are bitter about their confinement or sentence and are not impressed with any efforts to accommodate their educational needs. This lack of enthusiasm is attributed to those external influences associated with the world outside of the prison. Shea (1980) writes that the happenings on the "outside" are intensified in prison. The workings and functions within the prison environment can lead to many prisoners experiencing mood swings. Their moodiness can be triggered by impending parole hearings, visits, letters, loss of privileges or transfers. In addition, many prisoners are bitter because they have been rejected. They are often suspicious of anyone who offers them assistance, friendship, and help.

Prisoners are under a considerable amount of stress, which may lead to various coping strategies or behaviours. Chenault (in Roberts, 1973) notes that the stresses may be psychiatric in nature, brought about by being stripped of their personal possessions, freedoms, social contact, and respect. Corcoran (1984) writes that the experience of prison greatly increases psychological stress, which in turn has numerous effects on the operation of educational programs.

The problems associated with prisoner attitudes towards education are numerous, and there are no easy explanations or ways to deal with them. Researchers have suggested that one way of overcoming prisoner's negative attitudes towards education is through motivation, although Dell'Apa (1973) warns that many prisoners lack motivation for learning. However, there are benefits to be gained if deliberate attempts to motivate the prisoners are made according to Grainge and Kemp (in Forster, 1981). They suggest that prisoner motivation is the one factor which can overcome problems of apathy, disinterest and fear. Furthermore, Grainge and Kemp (in Forster, 1981) contend that however limited the motivation is, it is invaluable to each prisoner because as he achieves one goal he may set himself something harder. Motivating any student is challenging; however, the variance in prisoner behaviours and attitudes toward education adds greater impetus on the strategies for motivation.

Shea (1980) writes that the behaviours demonstrated by most prisoners in educational programs are varied and comparable to behaviours demonstrated by high school students. Ignatieff (1981) argues that the criminal personality consistently chooses according to a 'retarded' or 'egocentric' or 'deficient' calculus. Consequently this variance in personality traits has innumerable implications for a prisoner's behaviour patterns in educational programs.

Explanations as to the choice of behaviours by prisoners in an education setting have been researched by Ayers (1981b) Clark (1985), Ross (1981), and Ross and Fabiano (1981). They have reported that many prisoners have cognitive skill delays which may have impeded their progress in learning as well as stimulated their negative behaviours. The influences of these cognitive delays have significant impacts on attempts to determining those problems experienced by prisoners with education.

Ross (1981) contends that most offenders demonstrate deficiencies in cognitive functioning (lack of reasoning ability) which impairs their ability for effective social adaptation and places them at risk for criminal activity. In addition, Ross and Fabiano (1981) suggest that crimes may be committed by people who have not learned to learn and thus they tend to repeat their errors (crimes) over and over again. These people do not process information in the same way as others and as a result, apply a different set of meanings to the world. Ross (1981) suggests that identifying these cognitive functioning deficiencies and their remediation through educational programs may be a critical factor in rehabilitation for a large proportion of the adult offender population. According to Ayers (1981b), the rehabilitation process in respect of the cognitive deficiencies would entail the imparting of certain social skills through intensive interactions with a variety of staff and peers in the learning situation.

Prison educators are cautioned against the dangers of prisoners holding a negative, hostile attitude toward education. O.I.S.E. (1979) warns that negative attitudes and behaviours and lack of effort and indifference on the part of certain inmates are destructive to the entire educational process. If quality performance is not demanded the educational process will be of little real value. Prisoners demonstrate numerous attitudes and behaviours toward education which can ultimately effect the notion of education in prisons in general. This may in part be due to the prisoner's educational characteristics; therefore it is appropriate to ascertain the typical educational characteristics of prisoners.

#### 2.4 PRISONER EDUCATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

The educational characteristics of prisoners is the most prolific research area in the field of prison education and the dominant characteristic is that of illiteracy. In the United States of America, the Bureau of Prisons estimates that up to 50% of prisoners can neither read nor write (Reagen and Stoughton, 1976). Canadian figures are similar Bouliane (1985) notes that there are approximately 12,500 inmates held in the 59 federal penitentiaries across Canada. Approximately 70% of these prisoners are high school drop outs. Another 7% of the prisoners are native. The

significance of illiteracy in prisons has been reported by Morris (in Roberts, 1973), Eckenrode (in Roberts, 1973), Dell'Apa (1973), Gold (1983), and Bouliane (1986). Eckenrode (in Roberts, 1973) suggests that learning to read and write are essential for most prisoners because acquiring such skills not only prepares the individual to work in a respectable occupation, but also assists in the ability to make friends and cope with daily problems.

While the high incidence of illiteracy is considered a common educational characteristic of prisoners in general, Kidd (1981) suggests that the range of intelligence within the prison population is comparable to a grade eight level which is the Canadian norm. Results from such studies should be viewed from the perspective of the time in which the study was undertaken. However, an additional common educational characteristics of prisoners deals with their high school experiences.

Generally many prisoners are high school drop outs (Dell'Apa, 1973; Roberts, 1973; Shea, 1980). Roberts (1973) reports that over 85% of prisoners in the United States dropped out of school on or before their 16th birthday. In addition, Shea (1980) writes that most inmates have dropped out of school at an early age and because of the high value our society places on education, quitting does much to form a failure identity.

Additional educational characteristics of prisoners include low intelligence and learning disabilities. The prisoner population is characterized by gross education deficiencies. It has been estimated that the typical inmate functions two or three grade levels below the completed level in school (Gold, 1983). In Canada, 40% of federal prisoners are functionally illiterate and of the 12,500 prisoners in federal prisons about 3,200 are participating in education programs (1986, December. Winnipeg Free Press). The typical educational characteristics of prisoners according to Forster (1981) include: (a) low level of educational attainment, (b) very low intelligence, (c) short term attention span, (d) dyslexia, or reading disability; and (e) poor long term memory.

In gleaning the relevant research on the educational characteristics of prisoners it can be concluded that typically inmates have completed no more than 10 school grades and function two to three grade levels below that completed. Many prisoners have major literacy problems which affect their learning abilities. Because of their poor educational history and lack of competencies, they may have a very negative attitude toward any educational programs offered them. It is necessary therefore to appreciate the role and significance of education in enhancing and developing prisoner rehabilitation.

## 2.5 RATIONALE FOR EDUCATION IN PRISONS

The overriding justification for education programs in prisons is to prepare the prisoner for a successful return to the community at large. Arguments supporting education as a necessary process for preparing the prisoner to return to society are numerous (Bouliane, 1985; Clark, 1984; Forster, 1981; Fox, 1981; Knights, 1981; Lee, 1973; Lewis and McKechnie, 1981; MacCormick, 1932; Nelson and Hockema, 1981; O.I.S.E. report to the Solicitor General, 1979; Shea, 1980). The basic premise of all the reports is that education provides prisoners with the necessary skills and/or knowledge which will assist them in attempting to secure employment, as opposed to pursuing criminal activity. In addition, there are underlying benefits to be gained from prison education programs. The benefits include fiscal and monetary gains for the government, in that education programs are not as costly to run and administer as a plant operation in the prison. Bouliane (1985) reports that keeping prisoners behind bars is costly. The total budget for Canadian penitentiaries for 1985 was close to \$500,000,000 per year, that is, approximately \$40,000 per inmate. Education programs can assist in reducing these costs according to Ross and Fabiano (1981) because education decreases recidivism. They concluded that prisoner educational involvement has effectively reduced the

recidivism of those institutionalized offenders involved in education programs to approximately 50%. Most of the offenders were chronic recidivists with long histories of serious criminal behaviour.

An additional rationale for education in prison is based on humanitarian goals and liberation for prisoners. This can be achieved through their becoming aware of the necessary rules and laws of society. As a consequence, the prisoner is enlightened with the notion of justice and fairness for mankind which leads to the prisoner attaining growth, development, understanding and acceptance (Duguid, 1981).

Education in prison can be justified in respect of the many explanations for criminal behaviour, one of which is that prisoners demonstrate cognitive deficiencies which can lead to criminality. However, because this explanation has never enjoyed wide support according to Ross (1981), it has been argued that the lack of evidence for learning disability and crime does not deny that a large number of offenders have learning disabilities. The existence of learning disabilities demonstrated by prisoners justifies educational programs because they produce cognitive development, which in turn produces better reasoning capabilities. The reasoning capabilities can provide the prisoner with rational thinking patterns and can allow the

prisoner an opportunity to move away from criminal activity (Duguid, 1981; Ross and Fabiano, 1981; Nelson and Hockema, 1981).

Another consideration for providing education programs in prisons according to Johnson (in Roberts, 1973) is that educational deficiency interferes with social participation and relegates a person to social inferiority. Many researchers have established that education deals with the development and change of human behaviour through learning, and provides vital social integration skills (Glaser in Roberts, 1973; MacCormick, 1932; Nelson and Hockema, 1981; Vukevich in Roberts, 1973). Thus, education can stimulate socialization skills which enhance the prisoner's successful return to and functioning within the society.

Some reports for the justification of providing education programs within prisons have dealt with prisoner needs, others with the benefits to be gained from the exposure to learning for their adjustment and return to society (Forster, 1981; Nelson and Hockema, 1981; Ross and Fabiano, 1981). However, it is the societal demand for good citizenship which is the most accepted argument for providing prison education programs, and it is the easiest to justify (Roberts, 1973). Duguid (1981) suggests that the aim of prison education is to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary for the prisoners to successfully return

to and adjust to society. Ryan (in Roberts, 1973) writes that education is concerned with fitting individuals into the culture. In the prison context, education deals with bringing about changes in behaviour so individuals can function as productive members of society. In addition, Edinborough (1981) suggests that prisoners want to be free. To be able to exercise freedom and be a good citizen, it is necessary for an individual to use his/her mind. This is one of the principle concerns of education. The first task of prison education is to enhance the prisoner's ability to handle freedom, with all the responsibility that freedom involves.

However, given the prisoners' desire for freedom, greater understanding, study, and research as to the benefits of education is needed in order to facilitate the satisfaction of the prisoner's needs, and to justifying the role of education in prisons. Justifying education in prisons is best summed up by three specific aims of prison education reported by Shea (1980), cited by the American Correctional Association. The aims are:

1. To offer inmates sufficient academic education to enable them to face the needs of the world as better equipped persons.

2. To provide vocational training so that they might take their proper place in society and be economically free.

3. To offer cultural and hobby activities that will enable them to be better adjusted to prison circumstances and to broaden their area of interests and cultivate aptitudes which will help them adjust to release.

The justification for prison education programs is based on the humanitarian intent of returning the prisoner to society. Prisoners are in need of teachers who can not only understand their peculiar personalities and behaviour, but who also can provide educational opportunities which can assist in their successful return to society. The teacher of prisoners, therefore, must demonstrate some extra abilities in coping with the variance in student make-up, experiences and attitudes, together with the restrictive nature of the prison environment.

## 2.6 THE TEACHER OF PRISONERS

Like their counterparts in a regular school setting, teachers in prisons are constantly facing unique and demanding situations which either directly or indirectly affect their teaching performance. However, given the unique environment and clientele, there are some subtle differences faced by prison educators.

Hudson (1981) suggests that a major problem for prison educators is that a large number of teachers are unprepared

for teaching in prison. Many teachers are not familiar with the environment, have little or no understanding of criminology, and are open to manipulation and abuse from skilled social deviants. Furthermore, Ryan (1975) argues that the special nature of the prison environment requires that prospective prison educators have opportunities to participate in teacher training programs geared to this unique world. In 1979 O.I.S.E. found that there were no training programs in Canada designed to prepare teachers for those special tasks and influences involved in prison education. However, research indicating that prison educators must at least be accredited with recognized certification, based on the necessity for systematic curriculum planning for all levels has been reported (Corcoran, 1981; Dell'Apa, 1973; O.I.S.E 1979; Morris in Roberts, 1973). Presently, the education and training division of the Canadian Correctional Service is responsible for providing opportunities for accredited academic and vocational education to inmates in federal penitentiaries.

Many investigations and federal reports pertaining to education in prisons advocate that prison educators need training (Corcoran, 1984; Hudson, 1981; Ryan, 1975). It is the style and method of the training which is open to conjecture. O.I.S.E (1979) warns that a lack of training can cause prison educators problems in that they may face unnecessary obstacles. The obstacles may be in respect to

implementing programs and having unclear objectives. Furthermore, Dell'Apa (1973) argues that there is a need to question what type of training the prison educator must have in order to prepare him/her for the various problems the prisoners have. In a survey of programs available to inmates in penitentiaries throughout the United States of America, Dell'Apa (1973) discovered that there appears to be a tendency for teachers to have special training in corrections or law enforcement, and a lesser tendency to have training in special education or program planning. This situation gives credence to the argument that the institutions are more interested in the traditional function of prisons, security. Teaching prisoners is not considered a priority, which results in educational program planning in prisons being poor. In formulating teacher training procedures it may be beneficial to investigate international techniques.

The training of prison educators in England and Wales according to Burkey (in Forster, 1973) begins at the time of their initial appointment. An instructor has two weeks of induction into the institution and during this time, the instructor is given an introduction to each department in the establishment plus a thorough grounding in prison rules and regulations with regard to the treatment and control of prisoners. This is followed by another two weeks in another institution assisting an instructor who is already operating

a course in the same subject, thus gaining expertise under the supervision of an experienced instructor in the type of duties undertaken in their course.

In Canada, it has been reported that no special training for prison educators is available (O.I.S.E., 1979). However, recognizing the unique characteristics and needs of prisoners, arguments for the necessity that prisoners receive education from teachers with some training is purported by Eckenrode (in Roberts, 1973). He suggests that prison authorities must work with teacher training institutions to develop programs that will attract more and better recruits, as well as provide more appropriate training for those already employed. Furthermore, it is Eckenrode's (1973) contention that correctional education programs should be used for internships and teaching practice so as to develop prospective teachers.

According to Roberts (1973), in the past prison educators have learned to work with prisoners on the basis of trial and error, and for many this method has led to apathy, illness and withdrawal. Dell'Apa (1973) suggests that because of the problems with "burn out", prison educators must possess specific characteristics in order to work with prisoners. This observation is supported by Roberts (1973) who writes that the best attributes for a prison educator to possess are understanding, maturity, experience, empathy,

warmth, flexibility, self-confidence, a sense of humour, creativity, sound mental health, and the ability to accept and motivate persons who are from the criminal population.

Additional research regarding the characteristics necessary for prison educators indicates that they must have the ability to communicate openly and authoritatively (Roberts, 1973). They must be able to perpetuate and develop interpersonal skills between themselves and the prisoners, as well as amongst themselves (Eckenrode in Roberts, 1973). In conjunction with communicative and dynamic skills MacCormick (1932) suggests that prison educators should have the ability to diagnose, classify, and plan programs for the inmates. Of paramount importance is the growth of human relations skills for understanding, establishing rapport and motivating inmate students. Although these roles are the same as the regular teacher, the influences of the prisoners' educational characteristics, attitudes, and the limitations of the prison environment place greater strain on prison educators to perform their roles. Finally, Roberts (1973) reports that teachers in prisons need the same skills as any successful teacher, but they need the skills to a greater degree.

Appreciating the necessity of teacher training and the specificity of certain teacher characteristics for prison

educators, it is necessary to investigate the many variables that influence teaching prisoners.

## 2.7 VARIABLES THAT INFLUENCE TEACHING PRISONERS

Although there appears to be no single 'best' method for teaching prisoners, there are many variables within a prison which can determine teaching strategies and methods. These influences include a prisoner's intelligence, stability, experiences and needs. In addition, the daily working of the prison can influence teaching. This includes lawyer or family visits, attending medical and dental services, or judiciary requirements.

O.I.S.E (1979) notes that there is evidence of inconsistent use of teaching methods appropriate to adult education in prisons. More than half of the teachers believe in little or no sharing of authority with the inmates, while nearly half the administrators are on the side of mutual determination. Forster (1981) argues the primary function of the teacher is to marry the wants and needs of the prisoners, especially those on the lower rungs of the academic ladder, with what the institution is reasonably able to provide. Once this process has been established teaching strategies can be introduced to achieve the needs. Hence, the process of identifying the needs of the prisoners' emerge.

Recognizing the needs of those prisoners with poor educational achievement levels may best be addressed by using the developmental approach to remedial education in prisons (Grainge and Kemp in Forster, 1981; Wagner in Roberts, 1973). A developmental approach is the more appropriate strategy because the prisoner's vocabulary, experience and basal level of attainments can represent a foundation upon which to build (Grainge and Kemp, 1981). However, other researchers have rationalized different strategies.

Hickey and Scharf (1980) suggest that the teachers should encourage open dialogue, moral conflict which includes discussions regarding values and what is considered acceptable behaviour in society, and democratic interaction in the prison classroom. It is argued that these strategies foster a more mature understanding of social organizations and the law. In addition, Valletutti and Mopsick (in Roberts, 1973) contend that the educator must provide a conceptual base which stresses the social adjustment of each individual prisoner, and that the teacher must then be cognizant of the skills and competencies required for social success. Teachers must also be skilled in imparting these skills to the inmates.

Social skills and adjustment for prisoners are common themes in research concerning the teaching of prisoners.

Some writers suggest that attainment of social skills is necessary in order for the prisoners to return successfully to society (Duguid, 1979; Nelson and Hockema, 1981; Valletutti and Mopsick, 1973). By enhancing a prisoner's social skills, moral reasoning abilities can be stimulated which in turn facilitates changed behaviour. In support of this observation Duguid (1981) suggests that social skills can be attained in relation to a prisoner's stage of cognitive/moral development. Education can stimulate cognitive/moral development and can reduce a prisoner's inclination to engage in criminal behaviour.

While the rationale for a prisoner's social and moral development through cognitive growth are evident from arguments presented by Duguid (1979) and Nelson and Hockema (1981), many teachers rely on the curriculum and course requirements when organizing their classes. Duguid (1981) suggests that by introducing educational experiences aimed at developing thinking skills, moral reasoning abilities, social skills and political awareness, prison educators can directly affect the individual's sense of culture, perception and understanding of his or her biography. It is Duguid's (1981) belief that education in prisons should be aimed at the development of thinking ability and of character rather than the acquisition of content.

Recognizing that education allows for social, cognitive and moral development, Shea (1980) and Bouliane (1985) have warned that when working with prisoners in a classroom setting it is necessary to be tactful and reinforcing, and that the dominant requirement of teachers is their ability to motivate. Furthermore, Kendall (in Roberts, 1973) argues that the concept of motivation is one of the basic differences between regular education and correctional education. This is clarified by Eckenrode (in Roberts, 1973) who writes that the objective of motivating a prisoner is to encourage him/her to become a capable person, so that he/she will function in a way that will satisfy him/herself and his/her neighbour. One way to motivate is to demonstrate fairly quickly to the inmate that he/she can get "something" out of the program if they will apply themselves. In addition, Johnson (in Roberts, 1973) suggests that education can only be achieved when the prisoners voluntarily join the teacher in the common effort to learn. Motivating a prisoner to learn may be difficult as his/her failure to respond positively can be due in part to emotional influences such as feelings of vulnerability, nervousness or fear of exposure of one's weaknesses. Therefore, prison educators must demonstrate patience and perseverance when seeking constructive responses from individuals who were not reached by teachers in their younger years (Forster, 1981). Finally, Roberts (1973)

writes that when teaching in prisons of paramount importance is the growth of human relation skills for understanding, establishing rapport, and motivating inmate students.

Appreciating the gamut of influences a prison educator is required to consider when teaching in prisons, Shea (1980) reports some positive elements in working in this environment. A very basic one involves the inmates' characters. Generally the prisoners are open, "upfront", and provide immediate feedback in a class. Furthermore, prisoners are not interested in or impressed with academe; they are not particularly inspired by degrees and publications. They have been around, and they can relate to some subjects and discuss topics in a way that is impossible for younger students. Finally, Bouliane (1985), MacCormick (1932), and Shea (1980) report that although it is easy to be disappointed with the results of teaching in prison, there are always some breakthroughs. It might be someone learning to read for the first time, getting hooked on books, or passing a university or college course. Where the odds are against educational achievement, the occasional successes are very meaningful.

The incidence of these successes relies on the abilities and skills of the teacher in conjunction with the abilities and skills of the inmates. MacCormick (1932) argues that establishing and identifying an inmate's skills is dependent

upon the assessment and diagnosis strategies used by the prison educator. Furthermore, it is MacCormick's (1932) contention that much of the failure arising from prison education programs is that they operate on the principles of mass treatment. Prison institutions must employ educational experts capable of making skilled, scientific, individual diagnosis, and seeing that the treatment indicated is given. Bouliane (1985) reports that at present, education programs in prisons are faced with fiscal restraints and the necessity for employing diagnostic experts in the area of education has not been given sufficiently high priority. Currently, prison educators are relying on their own perceptions to diagnose prisoner educational abilities.

Given the almost innumerable influences on the implementation of education programs in prison, the variance in prisoner needs and attitudes concerning education, and the limitations and restrictions associated with the prison institution, it appears that the practice of adult education in prisons is justified.

## 2.8 ADULT EDUCATION IN A PRISON CONTEXT

Although historically Canada has recognized that adult education must be implemented in federal penitentiary education programs, evidence suggests that little if any is being practiced in institutions across the country

(Bouliane, 1985). Reasons for this lack of commitment to adult education in prisons are not easily identified. It may be due to a lack of training opportunities, the constraints of institutional policy and procedure, or the lack of expertise in the field of adult education in general.

Adult education deals with specific principles of education and instruction aimed at providing learning opportunities to those people in society who are considered and consider themselves to be adults, or who are required to accept, and for the most part do accept, adult responsibilities (O.I.S.E report to the Solicitor General, 1979). It must be appreciated that from this perspective prisoners in federal penitentiaries are by definition adults. Scrivastave (1985) suggests that prisoners are a special group of learners because first, they are adults not children and second, they are inmates in prison, not free people in society.

Acknowledging that prisoners are adults is the primary foundation for justifying the concept of adult education in prison education programs. The principles of adult education include implementing appropriate strategies to determine the needs of the individual by focussing on learning outcomes. Knowles (1980) and Brookfield (1986) concur that adult educators must provide quality instruction

in their subject matter, that the physical environment must be conducive to learning, and that the learners accept a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience.

Given the variance of prisoner characteristics and needs, institutional policies and constraints, and the uniqueness of the learning environment, it can be seen that implementing or adapting the principles of adult education may ensure appropriate and successful learning for the prisoner population. This premise was advanced from the investigation into federal prison education undertaken by O.I.S.E. (1979). Justification for adult education in prison education programs was based on the unique characteristics of the prisoners together with an awareness of the influences of the prison environment. The specific recommendations included several which are worth noting:

Recommendation 4: All education and training, whether academic or vocational, carried out within the corrections service, should be conducted in accord with the principles of adult education, allowing for the special characteristics of the inmate population.

Recommendation 5: All educational personnel within the corrections service must be provided with some training, both initial and continual in the principles and practices of adult education.

Recommendation 32: Elementary education within the system in the early stages should be based largely on principles and practices associated with adult basic education with an avoidance of measure of achievement associated with children.

Recommendation 79: The Service should establish a clear, comprehensive, and easily available set of requirements for new employees in education programs. One of the criteria should be that the applicant (for teaching) have some prior experience in the education of adults.

(from O.I.S.E, 1979; pp. 30,31,91 and 145).

Although the necessity for adult education in a prison context has been acknowledged in numerous reports and research, one explanation for the apparent lack of adult education practice in a prison context may be due to the conflict between the purposes of corrections compared to the purposes of education. Corcoran (1984) writes that there is obvious tension in the present system between the goal of corrections and the goal of education. While corrections is designed for custody and control, the purpose of education is freedom, growth and self-actualization.

There are those influences emanating from the restrictive nature of the prison institution which may not allow for the

provision of an environment conducive to learning. These include the rigorous workings of the institution which do not allow the prisoners free will. Their movements and activities are timetabled and observed, and they are constantly monitored. Furthermore, prisoner attitudes, behaviours and experiences may interfere with their ability or understanding of the adult education principle concerning sharing a responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience.

The conflicts among the purpose of imprisonment, education, prisoner attitudes and the influence of the prison environment may best be addressed by educators choosing to treat the prisoners as adults. This premise is supported by Bouliane (1985), Ignatieff (1981), Kidd (1981), and MacCormick (1932). Elaborating on this issue Ignatieff (1981) suggests that prisoners must be treated as adults. To attempt to understand the rationale for their actions implies neither tolerance nor respect for those actions, it means only that we must respect them as adult persons. In addition, MacCormick (1932) concludes that for the success of any adult education program in prisons, the necessary prerequisite is good teaching. The first step in good teaching is viewing the inmates first and foremost as adults. Finally, Kidd (1981) based on over 30 years of interaction with prisoners writes that, if educators are to share in the responsibility for educating prisoners they

must deal with prisoners as students and learners, not wards of one kind of government or another.

Advocating and practicing adult education in prisons requires effective strategies according to Bouliane (1985). He states that more work needs to be done to create strategies based on adult education principles and on actual prison conditions. These strategies can be based on adult basic education, individualized needs, meaningful learning experiences, intervention techniques and interaction skills.

Realizing the importance of strategies based on the adult education principles includes making the learning experiences meaningful. Eckenrode (in Roberts, 1973) argues that one of the reasons prisoners have not learned is because learning has not meant anything to them. They have been unable to relate their classroom work to any other experiences they have had. Only if classroom activities can be meaningfully related to something else they are doing, preferably something else they like doing, are prisoners able to develop the motivation to learn the things society indicates are important.

Shea (1980) and Bouliane (1986) contend that prison education is adult education and that, knowledge about the education of adults should be available to all prison institutions hosting education programs.

Chapter III  
DESIGN OF THE STUDY

This chapter presents information regarding the source of information, a description of the population, and the technique for data collection.

3.1 SOURCE OF INFORMATION: STONY MOUNTAIN FEDERAL PENITENTIARY

Stony Mountain federal penitentiary is a medium-maximum security penitentiary situated 25 kilometers north of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Of the total inmate population of 460, about 130 are involved in educational programs. The educational programs offered in the prison include university courses; vocational programs in motor mechanics, welding and building maintenance; and literacy and high school classes. Due to federal government financial cutbacks, programs offered by the Continuing Education Division, University of Winnipeg have been temporarily stopped. One professor who had taught under contract at the institution on two previous occasions organized a voluntary teacher program. The voluntary teacher program consisted of university professors teaching university courses at Stony

Mountain for three hours per week without any remuneration for their efforts. Six professors were involved in this program offering their services for a four week session, three hours per week. The voluntary program ceased in December, 1986.

Providing accurate figures as to the prisoner participation rates in educational programs is difficult because the prisoner population fluctuates considerably. Bouliane (1985) describes the reasons for the fluctuations as being due to the continual movement of arrivals and departures as prisoners are sentenced, transferred or released. This constant movement of prisoners does complicate the operation of an efficient educational system.

Table 2

Program Participation Numbers, May, 1987

	Program	Participation Numbers
Academic	Literacy	28
	Year 8 - 9	16
	Year 10	14
	Year 12	14
	Life Skills	14
	Total	86
Vocational	Building Maintenance	10
	Autobody	12
	Automechanics	12
	Total	34
Total participation in all programs		120

Source: R. Palmer, Senior Education Officer, Stony Mountain (personal communication, May 2, 1987)

Table 3

University Courses, 1986

Date	Course	Participation Numbers
Jan-April 1986	Introductory Psychology	14
	Introductory Anthropology	12
	Total	26
May-Aug. 1986	Introductory Geography	17
Sept.-Dec. 1986	Introductory Political Science	8
	Humanities and Social Sciences	9
	Total	17
Total participation in all programs		60

Source: A. Kroeger, Coordinator, Continuing Education,  
University of Winnipeg (personal communication, February 5th, 1987)

### 3.2 THE POPULATION

Between September, 1985 and May, 1987 eighteen educators were involved in education programs at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. Eleven individuals responded to the request to be involved in the study and 10 of these, one of whom was a female, indicated their willingness to participate in the research. One university professor declined the invitation to be a part of the study owing to

his perceived limited exposure to prison education. This meant that three out of a possible six professors agreed to be interviewed. Three of the six academic educators and four of the six vocational instructors were also interviewed for the study. In summary, the education personnel included university professors, Canadian Correctional Services Employees, and contract staff from Winnipeg School Division No.1.

The university professors are a separate and independent group under contract to the University of Winnipeg. All of the professors had doctoral qualifications. The professors were male and averaged 13 or more years involvement in tertiary education.

The four respondents involved in the vocational programs included three federal employees with an average of 18 years of teaching service. One respondent began work at the institution 25 years ago as a security officer, eventually becoming a qualified teacher in vocational programs. Two of the respondents began teaching within the institution as qualified tradesmen with no teaching qualifications. They have subsequently attained certification. Only one of the respondents, a federal employee, was a certified vocational instructor when he began work at the institution. One vocational instructor is under contract to Winnipeg School Division No.1 and is currently in the process of attaining

teacher certification through Red River Community College. This respondent has the least amount of service at Stony Mountain. However, because of the specificity of the trade and the instructor's experience in this particular area, he was employed on the condition that teacher certification be sought. All of the vocational instructors interviewed were male.

Three out of a possible six academic educators were interviewed. All are certified teachers; two have contracts with Winnipeg School Division No.1, while the other is a federal employee who has worked at Stony Mountain in the academic sector for 21 years. One of the two contract workers has been at the institution for the last two years. The other has worked there for one and a half years. One contract respondent has completed a pre-Master's degree year of studies in reading education at the University of Manitoba. The second respondent has no post graduate studies. The third respondent, a federal employee, has post-graduate studies in adult education from a University in the United States of America. The respondent does not hold a Master's degree, but has made significant progress toward the attainment of that degree. Of the three academic educators interviewed one was female.

Of the eighteen education personnel involved in prison education programs at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary

between the fall of 1985 and May, 1987, eleven responded to the request to partake in the study. Explanations for colleague refusal to participate in the study were suggested by participants and the educational administrators. Some respondents reported that their colleagues were not interested or too busy. One individual stated that a colleague would have liked to have been involved but was not in good health. One respondent, a university professor, declined the invitation because of his perceived lack of experience in the area of prison education. Two out of the ten subjects had studied adult education in a formal environment.

A tabular presentation of the subjects outlines each educational group, period of involvement as prison educators, and the employment status of each prison educator. The employment status indicates whether the subject is a federal employee with the Canadian Correctional Service, or a contract employee. The Involvement column indicates the period of time the educators has/had been working at the Stony Mountain Institution

Table 4

Demographic Analysis of Subjects


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Education Personnel	Involvement	Employment Status
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University Professors

1	1 month	volunteer
2	1 month	volunteer
3	2 terms/1 month	contract/ volunteer
Total = 3		

Vocational Instructors

1	*15 years	federal
2	22 years	federal
3	6 years	federal
4	3 years	contract
Total = 4		

Academic Educators

1	2 years	contract
2	1.5 years	contract
3	21 years	federal
Total = 3		

Total = 10

Note.

\* Respondent has been working at the institution for 25 years, the last 15 years as a vocational instructor.

Source: Research respondents (personal communication, April-June, 1987)

### 3.3 THE INTERVIEW

Open-ended interviews were conducted with prison educators who had been involved in education programs at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary between the fall of 1985 and May 1987. The interview questions were derived from major issues raised in the current literature on prison education and dealt specifically with the prison environment and the educational characteristics and needs of prisoners (see Appendix A).

The researcher drafted letters concerning the study to those professors and teachers who had worked as prison educators at Stony Mountain between September, 1985 and May, 1987. Six professors and 12 prison educators were given letters. The letter indicated that responses would be treated in confidence (see Appendix B).

After receiving confirmation from the respondents as to their willingness to participate in the study, the researcher contacted each participant by telephone to schedule interview location and times and these were based on the respondents' wishes.

All of the university professors chose to be interviewed in their offices on the University of Winnipeg campus. One respondent was interviewed in an office at the University of Manitoba. Three respondents availed themselves of the lunch hour scheduled at the prison and opted to meet the

researcher at the restaurant located in the front of the prison. Of these three respondents, one chose to remain inside the restaurant for the interview process, while another chose to sit outside. The third respondent met the researcher at this location and then drove to another area which was free from interruption. Three respondents requested the interviewer to come to their homes. All interviews, except for the one interview undertaken in the restaurant, were conducted in privacy with only the researcher and respondent in attendance.

The only negative situation during the interviewing processes was the interview which was conducted inside the restaurant. It was noted that the respondent was very direct in answering the questions. His replies were usually of one or two lines, and attempts to gain clarification or elaboration on issues were usually met with the respondent repeating the initial answer. In addition, the respondent was easily distracted when a familiar face entered the restaurant. When the respondent was asked if he would prefer to move outside or to a less distracting location, he chose to remain inside.

With the consent of the respondents, each interview was tape recorded. The researcher informed the respondents that a transcript of the interview would be typed and that a copy would be forwarded back to them as soon as possible for

their comments. The respondents were encouraged to contact the researcher at the University of Manitoba or at the researcher's residence. Both telephone numbers were given to the respondents. No respondent objected to the interviews being recorded.

The interviews averaged around 30 minutes in length and varied from 20 minutes to 50 minutes. This variance was as a result of the experience of the respondents, together with the locale of the interview. The shortest interview was carried out in the restaurant near Stony Mountain. The longest interview was conducted in the private residence of a respondent who had over 20 years experience as a prison educator.

After completion of each interview, the researcher replayed the tape in the privacy of her office and compared the responses to the field notes taken during the interview. At the end of each interview, the researcher added comments as to the respondent's attitude toward the questions on the tape. These comments were based solely on the perceptions and observations of the researcher. For example, the researcher noted if the respondent systematically thought about each question, appeared interested in it, and understood it. In addition, those instances where the respondent wanted to emphasize a perception were also noted.

After playing the tape, the responses were typed onto a computer. Each recording was headed with the respondent's participation number, the date and time of the interview, and the locale. The tape was replayed while the researcher read the manuscripts from the computer. Editing was carried out after listening to the complete tape. This process was done at least three times before the researcher was satisfied that all of the comments made by the respondents had been included and typed in the manuscript. Two copies of the manuscripts were printed, one for the respondent, the other for the use of the researcher in the study.

The manuscripts were returned to the respondents along with an accompanying letter which encouraged them to contact the researcher if they found any discrepancies in the recording of the data, or if they wanted to delete or add comments to the manuscript (see Appendix C). All of the respondents requested that the transcripts be forwarded to their private residences, as mail sent to the institution was opened and censored by prison authorities. The envelopes were hand addressed and labelled in black block letters PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL. Telephone contact verified that the manuscripts had been received by all of the respondents. No respondent contacted the researcher to alter the manuscripts in any way.

In attempting to ascertain what strategies are used by prison educators to recognize the needs and experiences of the prisoners, the following interview questions were asked:

1. How do you establish the previous educational attainment levels and experiences of your learners? If no attempt is made, why?

2. How do you check the authenticity of the prisoner's responses? If no checking was done, the difficulty in verifying the prisoner's responses was explored.

3. When it is obvious a prisoner has advanced skills and/or knowledge, do you encourage them to use them? How?

Obviously the variance in the prisoners' learning experiences and capabilities can influence their attitude, motivation and interest in education programs. Therefore, the adult education principle dealing with the learners accepting a share of the responsibility for planning and operating a learning experience may be difficult. The inmates' previous educational experiences may have been negative in nature, in that they consistently failed and believed that the process of learning was too difficult or of little value. Many prisoners have little or no motivation to learn because of their previous educational experiences (Duguid, 1981; Fox, 1986), or they do not believe there is anything beneficial to be had in learning (Kendall in Roberts, 1977). Furthermore, prison educators must demonstrate fairly quickly that the inmate can get

something out of the program if he is willing to apply himself (Kendall in Roberts, 1977).

Prisoner attitudes and motivation, in conjunction with their previous educational experiences and abilities can complicate the role of prison educators. Encouraging the learners to share responsibility for planning and working through learning experiences can be problematic. However, they may be paramount in breaking down many prisoners' misconceptions and attitudes toward education. Therefore, interview questions related to this principle included:

4. Do you allow the students to choose what they would like to cover in class? If yes, how is this done? If no, why don't you?

5. What teaching methods do you implement in the classroom? Please elaborate on the application of the chosen method.

6. Do you employ any strategies which would enable the prisoners to work at their own pace? Please elaborate on the reason for a lack of such strategies.

7. Do you encourage and motivate your learners in class? How?

Many of us have an understanding of the prison environment. Movies and television programs give us a preview of what prisons look like or how they are run, but our understanding of the prison environment is peripheral.

Not many "know" what it is like to live in a prison institution, or how the institutional environment can effect one's day to day living (Roberts, 1973).

The conditions in a prison are contrary to the adult education principle of providing a comfortable, supportive, relaxed learning environment. Bouliane (1985) argues that having to adapt to these conditions is a critical issue for those responsible for prison education, an issue that should be addressed by adult educators. Furthermore, Kendall (in Roberts, 1973) writes that the obvious difference between public education and prison education is the setting. It is open doors and windows versus bars. Prisoners are usually closely restricted and regimented 24 hours a day, seven days a week. MacCormick (1932) reports that for successful education programs in prisons, proper facilities for conducting classes and for quiet study outside the classroom are necessary.

In order to ascertain what efforts are made to adhere to the adult education principle of making the learning environment comfortable, supportive and relaxed, the following questions were asked:

8. It has been reported that prisoners often tease, ridicule and torment their peers. If this behaviour occurs in your class, can you tell me how you overcome it?

9. Are there ever any occasions whereby prisoners are moody, tense and irritable requiring your direct intervention? If so, what do you do to restore a conducive learning environment?

10. Providing a comfortable, supportive, trusting learning environment in a prison environment can be difficult. Do you attempt to alter the learning environment to accomplish any of these objective? If yes, how? If no, can you tell me why?

#### 3.4 ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

In order to ascertain the themes and issues generating from the prison educators' comments regarding those adult education principles dealing with the learning environment and sharing of the learning process, the analysis of the data was based on the interpretative approach to qualitative research. This method of analysis is used frequently in determining the structure and function of an organization or group being studied. Smith (1987) notes that for interpretative approaches, the object field to be studied is the acts and meanings ascribed to events by actors in a particular context.

In this study, the interpretative approach focussed on three areas. First were the specific characteristics and criteria of the adult education principles described by

Knowles (1980) and the Council on Continuing Education (1984). Formulating a checklist of the characteristics, the expressions and meanings made by the respondents were compared to the specific characteristics and criteria of the adult education principles. Smith (1987) refers to the respondent's meanings and expressions as emic data. Any reference made to the criteria or characteristics of the adult education principles was deemed to establish a relationship between the comments and the principles. Where a respondent made no direct reference to the characteristics or criteria of the principles, the researcher looked for any inference from the comments. For example if a prison educator said, "I like the students to be happy", the researcher inferred that the prison educator wanted to make the learning environment supportive and helpful. The criteria necessary for the provision of a conducive learning environment include: (a) it must be physically comfortable (as to seating, smoking, temperature, ventilation, lighting, decoration); (b) it must allow for interaction; (c) it must build relationships of mutual trust and helpfulness; (d) it must encourage freedom of expression and acceptance of differences; (e) it must stimulate cooperative activities; (f) it must encourage learning; and (g) it must engender an atmosphere of support and encouragement in the spirit of mutual inquiry (Knowles, 1980).

In addition to environmental characteristics, the criteria pertaining to sharing the learning process according to Knowles (1980) include: (a) the teacher shares his or her thinking about options available in the designing of learning experiences; (b) the teacher involves the learners in selecting from a variety of learning materials and methods; (c) intended learning outcomes are sequenced so that the learners are able to recognize their progress toward achieving the stated learning outcome; and, (d) program content, instructional materials and delivery processes are relevant and timely for achieving learning outcomes.

The second process of the interpretative method for the analysis of the data looks at those comments that are typical and usual in the culture or society. Florio-Ruane (1987) suggests that this information provides a basis for understanding how everyday life is organized in a particular setting compared with life in other settings and at other times. The prison environment and society are unique. The environment is characterized by restrictions, guards, strict adherence to rules, punishment for failure to adhere to the rules, locks, prison dress, passes and behaviour regulations. In addition, the prisoner clientele are individuals who have one thing in common: they are incarcerated. Given the nature of the prison environment and of those within prison, many comments can be made that

are only attributable to that society or culture. Comments may include references to "frisking" where the prisoners are searched for contraband or weapons, or "shut downs" where the prisoners are required to remain in their cells.

The third process in analyzing the data through the interpretive approach is to interpret the emic data (respondent's meaning and expressions) to ascertain if the prison educators are attempting to administer the principles of adult education and to determine what problems, if any, they are experiencing in administering the principles. This process attempts to determine, by way of the assertions, the structure and function of the organization being investigated. Smith (1987) writes that empirical assertions are statements of findings derived inductively from a review of field notes and a systematic search for confirming or disconfirming evidence in the assertions. Furthermore, quotations provide vivid documentary evidence that what the assertion claimed to have happened did occur at least once.

In discovering underlying uniformities in the original set of emic data, the analyst may be able to determine answers or explanations in relation to the purpose of the study. After identifying incidents or references from the same question a number of times, it becomes a quick operation to see what is occurring, if there are problems, and the possible reasons for the problems. For example,

many prison educators may comment on the prison environment. These comments can be in relation to the environment as a whole, that is the prison institution, or in relation to the classroom or learning environment within the prison. Therefore, the category of prison environment is dealt with in respect of the environment which includes the bars, locked doors, or the presence of guards. Other comments, although in reference to the prison environment, are more specific and related to the learning environment. This includes references to the classroom furniture, equipment and location.

It can be seen that the interpretative approach to qualitative research provides an understanding for determining if the adult education principles of sharing the learning process and providing an environment conducive to learning are in evidence at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. From this information, the interpretative analysis of emic data enables the researcher to present etic data. Smith (1987) reports that etic data are the researcher's interpretation of the data. This allows for the drawing of conclusions and possible explanation for specific phenomena that have arisen in the research. It is the final stage in the analysis of the data. Chilcott (1987) notes that discussions provide the basis for determining the major themes, issues or problems determined by the interpretation of the data. Interpretative analysis

of the data, writes Smith (1987), provides explanations, understanding and appreciation for the presence or lack of specific situations in the area being investigated. Furthermore, the interpretive approach embraces a type of philosophical idealism. There are no universal laws to search for; instead, the goal is to understand particular actions and meanings in particular contexts. Finally, Denny (1978) writes that the benefit of this type of research is that it allows for an understanding of "what is occurring" in the research environment.

## Chapter IV

### RESULTS OF THE DATA

This chapter presents the main findings in response to the open-ended interview questions posed to the university professors, vocational instructors and academic educators at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. The ten respondents answered all of the questions. While it was evident that the prison educators did attempt to make the environment conducive to learning and share the design of the learning process, the workings and functions of the prison institution directly affected education programs. In addition, only two out of the ten prison educators interviewed were familiar with or had studied adult education.

The university professors involved in this study represented the social sciences and in particular, sociology, psychology and political science. In response to the questions related to determining the prisoners' previous educational experiences, all of the professors reported that details concerning a prisoner's previous educational experiences were given by the students during the scheduled breaks from the class, and that the information was

volunteered by the students. Comments in this area included, "I knew in half the classes, maybe more, why they were there. They volunteered it at coffee time." In addition, "In time, most of them did tell me what they were in for."

Two professors had been advised by an experienced university prison educator not to actively seek any specific information regarding the inmates' education or personal history. This strategy was advised to enable the professors to teach rather than be influenced by the prisoners' criminal record.

The professors commented on the prisoners' attitudes to their classes as being keen and enthusiastic. They received requests from the prisoners to bring books from the university library, and they noted that prisoners were enthusiastic about completing class assignments. Remarks to support the notion of the prisoners' having a positive attitude toward learning include, "I found the students very forthcoming and interested". Furthermore, "I was really impressed with the students. They seemed to be very highly motivated, they were always prepared and had done their reading."

Although the professors were praiseworthy of the prisoners' attitudes toward their classes, all three professors indicated that the prison environment had

negative influences on their programs. Common concerns expressed were in relation to carrying of passes, the presence of guards and the sounds associated with the locking of doors. A very descriptive comment which best sums up the sentiments of all the professors was,

I find the inside of gaols absolutely appalling. I find, not so much the brutality of gaols but the boredom, the lack of imagination, the lack of creativity, the lack of anything vaguely human to be quite appalling. I find the place to begin with is oppressive. There is this institutional light green that everything is painted with. The kind of endless smell that is of male sweat, the grease of the kitchen and the smell of the toilet facilities. The guards are always there, always watching.

As well as being aware of the physical influence of the prison environment, all three professors mentioned the interference of administrative procedures in the running of their classes. Reference was made to the casual way in which students were withdrawn from class for unspecified administrative purposes. Two professors suggested that the administrative withdrawal of students without explanation reinforced their perceived insignificant status in the prison institution. One professor said, "The university courses introduce more liberal minded elements into the

system. In some sense you are there under sufferance and education is the lowest priority offered to the inmates, at least from the administration's view."

Strategies associated with the adult education principle of sharing the learning process did not appear to be directly offered by the professors. All of the professors indicated that they were responsible for their classes. However, one professor said that he would begin each class as planned, but allowed student discussion or input to direct the remainder of the class. The professor suggested that this method may be seen as an indirect strategy for encouraging the learners to become involved in the class and learn. The university professors were involved in prison education programs for a shorter period than the vocational instructors. This may account for the variance in the vocational instructors' responses.

Four vocational instructors were involved in the study and each instructor responded to all of the questions. Given the practical nature of the vocational programs which include motor mechanics, building maintenance, welding and body shop, it is not surprising that the responses to the questions were significantly different from those of the university professors.

In relation to those questions related to the prisoners' education experiences, two instructors relied on the results

of a formal testing procedure before admitting the students into their program. The Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT), which is designed to determine educational levels in spelling, grammar and mathematics, was administered to all incoming students. The reliance on the tests is due to apprenticeship board conditions in two vocational programs, motor mechanics and body shop, which stipulate year 9 or equivalent as the mandatory base level of educational attainment necessary for acceptance into an apprenticeship program. An explanation for testing the prisoners was, "I have to find out where that individual is, where his weaknesses are, and what he is like."

Only one vocational instructor mentioned that a student's previous experience was considered when organizing the program. If a student indicated that he had worked in the field before, the instructor would watch him. If he was capable he would use him as an assistant. The instructor said, "I ask a few questions and I'll watch him at work, but usually he hasn't got the right skills. Nine times out of ten they say they've got the experience but they haven't." This comment was substantiated by all four vocational instructors who indicated that they are not interested in the prisoners' previous work experience because as a general rule, what the prisoners say is not borne out.

The working conditions in the vocational area were reported to be excellent. Although the learning environment was praised the vocational instructors were critical of the prison institution in general. They indicated that their workshops were fully equipped and functional, and that there is adequate space and facilities for their programs. However, the vocational instructors noted that there was a problem in teaching their programs and complying with the workings of the institution. The most common problem was that of prisoners being withdrawn from class in order to report to administration. Comments included, "There is the pass movement. It could be for any place. All of a sudden someone wants to see him. So we have a lot of movement through the day, and I find it really interferes with my work." An additional comment was,

Generally you get used to what happens around here, it just becomes second nature to us. But there are certain things that you hate doing. It is things like when the place is shutdown and you are required to do a search. We must go into each cell and search through a prisoner's effects and search for contraband, money or drugs. It is not a nice situation.

The problems associated with the searching and frisking of inmates, particularly for the federal teachers, may create some difficulty with sharing the learning process.

This may partially account for the lack of evidence to suggest that vocational instructors do share the learning process. Another may be that programs must comply with the curriculum that is established by the apprenticeship authorities.

The instructor who teaches the students seeking a certificate awarded by the Winnipeg School Division No.1 has greater flexibility and freedom in the planning and implementation of course functions than those instructors influenced by the regulations of the apprenticeship authorities.

Although the regulations of the apprenticeship authorities together with the required duties of the federal employees can affect the possibility of sharing the learning process, three vocational instructors adopt strategies to overcome this situation. The strategies include varying their teaching methodologies, allocating positions of responsibility, delegating duties and encouraging communication between the instructor and the student as well as fostering communication among the students. One instructor said,

I keep on telling them and I keep stressing, if there is anything you want to question, tell me to stop. I tell them constantly to ask. I even say that if you feel you want to ask me privately and

not in front of your classmates then just drop me a hint. I encourage them and say don't hesitate to come and talk to me privately.

An additional comment related to teaching strategies was, I have film strips and tapes to use on a VHS so they can work on their own. I can correct their work and assist them. I use the overhead projector. I really use all methods of teaching. A lot of the time I will not do classroom work for a long time. I will let them work in the shop and when they get stuck they ask me. I will go there and give them a demonstration and ask questions about how they get into this difficulty. Then I'll watch for about 15 to 20 minutes before I go away.

One vocational instructor was adamant that his role was one of leadership and authority. He seemed to feel that many prisoners were lazy. The instructor said,

I think that I am pushing them a lot of times. I will notice a lot of laziness, so I keep pushing them and pushing them. You can tell just by the way they go about it that I am not pushing them to their limits. Gradually they will conform to my style and they begin to produce better. They are happier for it too, and they are grateful.

The vocational instructors are influenced by the apprenticeship authorities, the institutional workings and their perceptions when working with the prisoners. These influences were also evident in comments offered by the academic educators.

Three out of six academic staff responded to the study representing life skills, basic literacy, and mathematics and science disciplines. Life skills is not a traditional academic course; it is more a socialization program in which the teacher attempts to foster and improve the self-image of the inmates. This is achieved through informal discussions in a group setting covering problems which are faced by the inmates, and formulating strategies to overcome them.

Attempts to determine the prisoners' educational experiences vary in each subject area. The life skills teacher used indirect strategies to ascertain the inmates' experiences and attitudes toward education. This was achieved by encouraging discussions on many issues and concerns that the inmates are facing. After initial contact and constant observations from the group discussions, the teacher determines what issues will be covered during that class and additional classes. The teacher said,

My course is discussion based, which is less threatening for those who are illiterate. Their previous experiences with school have not been

good so in some ways I am first step in for them. I focus on the future and getting out and staying out.

The teacher in the literacy program undertakes formal evaluations using the Adult Basic Literacy Exercises to determine the educational levels of the inmate students in the areas of reading, writing and mathematics. The achievement scores in each area are used for diagnostic procedures.

Given that academic educators place significant impetus on their observational strategies when working with the prisoners, the prison environment also influences the presentation of education programs. Although all three academic staff indicated that the classroom furniture was just like in a regular high school classroom, one teacher commented specifically about the bars on the windows which were constant reminders of where he was working. The teacher said, "The classroom has two tables put together with chairs and a blackboard out front. The only difference between my room and the regular classroom is the bars on the windows, which means I never forget that I am there.

The workings of the institution affected the academic educators and their programs. All three teachers mentioned the nuances associated with the doors being locked and everything having to be locked away. In addition, the three

academic educators commented on interruptions associated with institutional functions. These interruptions were in relation to the students leaving class because of visits by their lawyers, or when there was a shutdown and the prisoners were required to remain in their cells. Comments concerning this problem included,

Searching and frisking inmates really doesn't do much to enhance your position as a teacher. If you have to do this the inmates see you as being something other than as teacher. This is not desirable. I think we should be professional with them but this is not enhanced by such things as frisking.

Another comment concerning the function of the institution was, "Our students are constantly called out for all kinds of reasons. We have constant interruptions. But basically we are teaching an individualized program because that is the only way that I can cope."

Responses to questions related to sharing the learning process demonstrate that all three academic educators indicated that their learners were involved in sharing the responsibility for the learning process. However, there was variance in the degree to which it was shared and this depended on the nature and purpose of the program. One course was completely individualized and the students were

responsible for their own sequential movement through the course. In a different class, an academic educator chose to fluctuate from the students working individually and independently to working with the whole group in a "chalk and talk" presentation. This strategy is adopted when students are demonstrating common errors in dealing with a situation or when the students are moving onto a new area or topic.

#### 4.0.1 Common issues for all of the educators

The most dominating and overriding theme arising from comments made by all of the education personnel interviewed for this study was in respect of the prison environment. The interruptions to educational programs because of institutional requirements in which prisoners were withdrawn from class are a common problem and were mentioned by all ten prison educators interviewed. These procedures were seen as disruptive.

The vocational instructors and academic educators shared a recognition of the importance of determining an inmates' experiences and educational levels. The variance in achieving this information was evident with two out of the four vocational instructors choosing a formal testing strategy. Academic staff fluctuated between formal testing and incidental observations. The university professors

relied on the class lists submitted to them by the administration.

Seven respondents referred to the "ever present" locking of doors as being seen as a constant reminder of their working location. In conjunction with reference to doors locking, two of the prison educators commented on the annoying requirement of having to lock things away and check for equipment constantly.

Chapter V  
ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The analysis of the data was based on the interpretative approach to qualitative research. This involves ascertaining those themes and issues regarding the existence and implementation of the adult education principles of dealing with the learning environment and of sharing the learning process at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary.

Smith (1987) writes that the interpretive approach to qualitative research focus on the acts and meanings ascribed to events by the actors (in this study, prison educators) in a particular social context (the prison institution). Four steps were undertaken for interpreting the emic data, that is, the respondent's comments.

The first involved comparing the comments to the specific criteria and characteristics of the adult education principles in order to determine a relationship between the prison educator's perceptions and the principles of adult education. Secondly, the expressions and terms used by the respondents that were unique to the environment were identified. This information is beneficial for

understanding the everyday workings of the institution being investigated (Florio-Ruane, 1987). The third process of the interpretative method of analysis involves attempting to interpret the comments made by the respondents in respect of the structure and function of the prison education programs. This information is beneficial for determining the problems that they may have been facing in implementing their programs. The final stage is offering empirical explanations as to the reasons why problems have occurred and suggesting strategies that may assist in overcoming these problems.

#### 5.1 RELATIONSHIP OF COMMENTS TO THE ADULT EDUCATION PRINCIPLES

The university professors indicated that they encourage discussions in their classes. This in itself is fundamental to the notion of allowing interaction, which is a component of the adult education principle of providing a conducive learning environment. The discussions allowed for classes to be personal and intense, interaction being seen as "heated" and "spirited".

Class discussions improved the learning environment at varying levels. One professor indicated that the students contributed to determining how things went because of their questions and concerns on specific issues. Also controversial subjects were discussed including politics,

judiciary systems and crime and punishment. All three professors noted that the quality of the discussion was improved by the fact that the prisoners demonstrated maturity and rational behaviour during the classes and that their loyalty and collegiality toward each other was commendable. In addition, the professors indicated that the discussions they engaged in with the prisoners allowed for significant interaction.

However, there were problems with some prisoner classroom behaviours which two professors found disruptive. These behaviours dealt with the prisoners' ability to enter and leave the classroom whenever they so desired. This behaviour is generally accepted in adult education practice, as it is associated with respecting the adult's ability to either accept or reject the class content or procedures. Although continued practice of this behaviour can become too disruptive for the rest of the class, in theory, if an adult chooses to leave a class a trained adult educator recognizes that at this time, the class may not be of interest to the adult learner. As a result, many adult students are not required to remain and are encouraged to leave the class of their own volition if it is of no interest or perceived benefit to themselves. Two professors found this behaviour to be very annoying, and their comments were based on the disruptive nature of these types of actions. No recognition existed that the students' actions indicated lack of

interest. Rather, the professors were concerned with the interruption that occurred in the class, as opposed to attempting to understand or ascertain why the students chose to leave.

Only one professor made any attempts to physically alter the classroom. In this instance, the chairs were moved to a semi-circle to encourage discussions. Although attempts to alter the classroom for comfort were mentioned by one professor, all three went to great lengths to encourage the prisoners to learn. The perceptions of the professors were that they attempted to encourage the prisoners to a high degree in comparison to that of professors in a university setting. All three told their groups that they did not want to know what they were "in" for, and that they were there to help them to learn. Providing this information may have enabled the prisoners to reassess their perceptions and actively pursue learning. Thus, the professors indirectly encouraged the inmates to learn. This was further demonstrated through their efforts to take books from the University's library to the students at the prison. Encouraging learning reflected the professors' awareness of the prisoners' situation, and their recognition that because of the depressing nature of incarceration, educators must constantly struggle to maintain the interest, excitement, and attention of the students.

All of the professors' comments were based on comparing their work and involvement with students in the prison setting to their work and involvement with university students. The stark contrasts that emerged, particularly in relation to the basic philosophy and intent of each institution, may account for the lack of evidence indicating the professors did attempt to share the learning process. Only one professor alluded to the principle of sharing of the learning process in that he relied on class discussions and dynamics to determine the flow of the class, as well as for planning the next session. While this strategy does allow for the inmates to have some input into the planning and structure of the learning outcomes, there was still no evidence as to a direct input by the prisoners for the implementation of the principle of sharing the learning process. It appears that the professors would need some guidance and demonstration for implementing this principle.

The major influence on the implementation of the adult education principles concerning both the environment and sharing the learning outcomes was that all three professors lacked knowledge and understanding as to what constitutes adult education and more importantly, what strategies are needed to implement the principles of adult education. On the other hand, the intent and structure of the vocational programs contain a marked difference in the presentation of subjects from that of the university courses. This

difference could allow for an assumption that the implementation of the adult education principles for the vocational programs would be more evident. The vocational instructors' programs are practical in nature, and as a result the implementation of the adult education principles relevant to the environment and sharing the learning process are tentatively approached from a pragmatic perspective.

Two vocational programs within the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary are based on the prisoners attaining tradesmen certificates. The Manitoba Apprenticeship Board plays a major role in determining the course content, and the instructor's function is to provide apprenticeship opportunities to the prisoners. One of the Board's stipulations is that the minimum grade level for involvement in apprenticeship programs is grade 9 or equivalent. In order for the inmates to become involved in the apprenticeship programs they must have this level of achievement.

Providing effective vocational programs relies on good workshop conditions and availability of equipment. The adult education principle related to providing an environment that is conducive to learning is very much evident in terms of equipment and space in all of the vocational programs offered at Stony Mountain. All four vocational instructors interviewed commented on their

working environment and expressed no problems with their room and equipment.

Indications that the vocational instructors give support and encouragement to the prisoners were numerous and diverse. Instructors test for the academic levels of incoming students. In the process they talked individually with each student and it was perceived that the prisoners appreciate this approach. Another instructor who deliberately attempts to encourage the prisoners to learn tests his students every two weeks. These tests are formulated by the instructor and are "true" or "false" in design. He comments that,

All the questions are true or false and I sometimes have to read them. I deliberately give them high marks, you know around the 80's or the 90's. This really pleases them as most have never got a mark so high; I do it so that they will continue on the course.

One vocational instructor allows a separate day for the prisoners to catch up on missed work. This is done as many prisoners have had to leave the the class for a variety of reasons. Usually the extra day's work is individualized and the inmates work with the audiovisual equipment or they approach the instructor individually. By giving individualized assistance to the prisoners attempts are made for sharing the learning process.

While the vocational instructors' comments pertaining to providing an environment that is conducive to learning are similar, attitudes and strategies for sharing the responsibility for the learning process are markedly different. The demands of the apprenticeship authorities in setting the curriculum together with one instructor's perceptions that the inmates are lazy support this observation. The inferences of seeing the prisoners as lazy are not meant to infer that the comments are inappropriate in their educational situation. It appears in this case, that the instructor believes he is solely responsible for the learning process and the students have no input in relation to the design or sharing of that process. On the other hand, one vocational instructor does attempt to some degree to involve the inmates in the learning process. He designs lesson plans and pins them on the noticeboard. This visibility allows the prisoners to see the sequenced outcomes and intent of their learning.

Of the four vocational instructors interviewed only one has studied adult education. Given that only one out of the four vocational instructors has any training, experience or knowledge of the adult education principles, it can be argued that the lack of implementation of those strategies pertinent to sharing the responsibility for learning and providing a conducive learning environment is based on the vocational instructors' lack of knowledge and expertise in

the area of adult education. The vocational instructor who has had exposure to studying adult education mentioned that implementing some of the strategies of adult education in his vocational program proved to be very successful. This gives some justification for practicing the principles in the other programs. They may prove to be of benefit to the effectiveness of all educational programs.

The academic educators share similar concerns and problems when working with the prisoners. The three academic educators' comments indicate that their implementation of the adult education principles concerning the environment and sharing the learning process is based on the individualized format of their programs. All three academic educators promote interaction, particularly interaction with and among the prisoners. This is because of the individualized format of the educational programs. The educators had the room designed so that the students can work in circles, and they have attempted to enhance the learning environment by hanging posters around the room. However, the posters soon disappeared. The perceptions of the academic educators are that they encourage learning for the prisoners on a very enthusiastic and continual basis. This is indicated by their belief that they exceed what a regular teacher would demonstrate and, is attributed to their awareness of the influence of the prison environment and the educational characteristics and needs of the prisoners.

Promoting discussions in class was a common strategy for encouraging learning, as was strict adherence to the policy of ensuring that what is said in class remains in the class. This policy has systematically broken down barriers and encouraged the prisoners to participate in class discussions. Freedom of expression allows for greater input on the students' part in determining the design and direction of the learning process.

The adult education principle of sharing the learning process was far more evident in the academic educators' perceptions concerning their programs, compared to the vocational or university educational personnel perceptions. This may have been because the format of the classes is totally individualistic in nature. The subject matter in the literacy and life skills classes focus on staying out of prison, and the notion of sequential learning, another important aspect for sharing the learning process, is practiced by all three academic educators interviewed.

One of the three academic educators interviewed had studied adult education principles at a university in the United States. However, this individual did not offer specific information regarding the implementation of the principles in his particular program.

There was evidence of a lack of knowledge on the part of two academic educators as to what constitutes adult

education and what strategies are applicable to implementing the principles of adult education. Having more insight and awareness of these strategies may assist the academic educators in working with the inmates in all of the programs offered in the academic sector of the prison educational programs. Although the academic educators encourage interaction and learning, and allow for individual development throughout the courses, the strategies for sharing the learning process appear to be implemented on an ad hoc basis.

The second interpretive process for the analysis of the data deals with noting the comments that are typical to the culture and society. This information allows for an understanding of the workings and everyday life of a particular setting (Florio-Ruane, 1987).

## 5.2 ANALYSIS OF COMMENTS TYPICAL TO THE PRISON ENVIRONMENT

This section examines the prison educators' comments that are typical to the prison environment. The typical comments are characterized by the many related elements dealing with the function of the institution, personnel and the prison environment. Given that the nature of prisons is one of restriction, regimentation and lack of certain privileges, the comments made are attributable to the peculiar circumstances associated with prisons.

The university professors' comments were highlighted by using common terms when discussing prisoners and the prison institution. However, an outstanding feature from the comments made by the professors is that one professor referred to the prisoners as students throughout the entire interview. In this particular case reference made to the class members was always the "students" as opposed to the recognized labels of prisoner, inmate or convict. The other professors fluctuated between referring to class members as students or as inmates.

Generally, Stony Mountain federal penitentiary was called "prison", although when the professors were discussing the concept of prison education in a general sense, references were made to "institutions", "penitentiary" and "gaol". All of the professors' comments indicated general terms for the typical elements associated with prison setting. This was evident with reference to the following: guards, warden, parole, punishment, discipline, judge, lawyers, cells, and crime. All three professors made specific reference to the sound of "locking doors" and the necessity to "wear the passes", which are needed by the guards to make security checks. Although the professors' comments were general in nature, the vocational instructors were far more specific in their references to working with prisoners.

The four vocational instructors tended to use language that can be considered more colloquial to prison environments. When discussing their interaction with the prisoners they used expressions such as "doing time" (length of sentence), "be a rat" (leak confidential information to the authorities), "out in the fish tank" (new prisoners' holding area), and "what they are in for" (details of the prisoners' crimes). As well as using unique comments concerning the prisoners, all four vocational instructors used adjectives which are specific to the prison environment. One vocational instructor referred to the guards as "screws"; others mentioned "frisking", "bars", "lock ups", "lifers" and "repeaters".

The vocational instructors also recognized the institutional procedures that affect their programs and made cursory references to visits by lawyers, parole hearings, court appearances, solitary confinement and correctional officers.

Overall the vocational instructors' comments were more realistic in tone when discussing the prisoners and the prison environment. This may be due to the practical emphasis of their courses, in which a lot of talk is associated with demonstrations. As a result, the vocational instructors may have altered their terms of reference to accommodate the prisoner students. Alternatively, they may

have used it as a strategy to gain acceptance by their inmate students. In addition, as two instructors have over 20 years interaction with the prisoners, and the other two vocational instructors have six and three years involvement respectively, it would appear that prison language acquisition and assimilation would be inevitable. On the other hand, the academic educators tended to fluctuate from colloquial descriptors to the prison and prisoners to general references to them.

The most typical comment from the academic educators was reference to the institution as being "prison". Like the vocational instructors, the academic educators referred to class members as "the guys" or "the men". Reference to the label "prisoner" was only used when discussing prison education in general.

Specific discussions about the prison environment were highlighted by comments dealing with security. This included constantly having to bother with "locking things away" and "you are reminded where you are when you hear the locking of the doors behind you". Mention was also made of the guards, weapons and bars. One educator mentioned that "my room has bars on the window".

Overall the academic educators have adopted some of the common vernacular that is associated with prisons and prisoners. These comments varied from "refusing to frisk a

fellow" to referring to the guards as "screws". However, when two academic educators used the term "screws", they were discussing it in the third person context, that is they were relaying an incident that was reported by prisoners.

From all of the prison educators' comments, terminology and jargon specific to the prison environment were evident. The vocational instructors and academic educators used more of the colloquial terms than the university professors. This phenomenon may be attributable to the length of time that the professors were involved in the prison education programs at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. However, it was interesting to note that one professor reported, "I found myself becoming a little more vulgar in the language that I used, a little bit more colloquial." The professor's explanation for altering his terminology was as a result of becoming critical of the purpose and function of the prison institution. He said, "I found myself becoming implicitly critical of the kinds of institutions that one felt, to some degree, influenced where they were. I was a professor who went in and to some degree identified with their cause and circumstances." The other two professors did not make mention as to how or if the prisoners or prison affected them in any way.

The third phase of the interpretive model is to attempt to determine the structure and function of the prison in

relation to the comments made by the respondents. This process interprets the prison educator's comments to ascertain what, if any, problems they are experiencing in teaching in prisons. In addition, information is gleaned to determine how the prison educators teach the prisoners.

### 5.3 MOTIVATION OF EDUCATION PERSONNEL TO BE INVOLVED IN PRISON EDUCATION

The first area of investigation was to determine why the educators became involved in prison education. It is from understanding the educators' reasons for involvement in prison education that foundations for substantiating explanations concerning their perceptions of adult education at Stony Mountain can be attained.

An underlying interest in studies dealing with prison education is how and why prison educators become involved with an institution that represents everything that is opposite to what education represents. That is, institutions are restrictive, regimented and governed by strict rules and regulations, whereas education connotes freedom, acquisition of knowledge and skills, and the opportunity for the expression of one's beliefs, attitudes or understanding. Determining why educators become involved in teaching in prisons can give greater insight and understanding of their perceptions with the concerns, problems and shortcomings they may experience in the prison.

Having access to this information can also explain why some educators do not possess the skills necessary for teaching in a prison institution. Several Royal Commissions and other investigations have recommended that prison educators must have familiarity with the principles of adult education; hence, it would be logical that employment of prison educators would require that they are familiar with and understand the adult education principles. This is not the case at Stony Mountain as only one vocational instructor of the four that were interviewed, and one academic educator had any formal exposure to the principles of adult education.

All three professors had been approached by the University administration to teach at the prison. Yet, the reasons offered for accepting the teaching position at the prison were vastly different. One professor was active in education programs because the Government had been indecisive in funding the university programs, and the university administration was keen to continue one program in order to justify further allocation of money. The two other professors' reasons for involvement with programs at Stony Mountain were more personal in nature. Comments included being bored with working at the university, financial benefits and, the more intrinsic notions of involvement being a "social exercise" or an "interesting experience". However, under totally different employment

circumstances, the vocational instructors explanations for their involvement in prison education were very different.

Determining why the vocational instructors were involved in prison education was interesting in that the vocational instructors had been involved in prison education for many years. Two instructors have been at the prison for over 20 years; and both are Canadian Correctional Services employees. One was previously employed as a security guard before becoming a vocational instructor. This respondent wanted a change and believed his vocational skills were acceptable for teaching. When the institution introduced the course the respondent became a vocational instructor, and over the years has attained teacher certification. His colleague, a shop manager prior to his employment at the prison, saw an advertisement in a paper. He was interested because he wanted a change from retail mechanical work. After submitting his application for the position he contacted a former trade teacher to discuss his chances of getting the job. The instructor encouraged him to take the position.

The third and fourth vocational respondents have been involved for six and three years respectively. One respondent, a Canadian Correctional Services employee, had experience as a trade teacher in a high school and became a prison educator after failing to secure tenure in the

school. The fourth vocational instructor is a contract teacher working for Winnipeg School Division No.1. At present the instructor is undertaking courses on a part-time basis to secure teaching certification at Red River Community College. He became involved with prison education as he was getting bored with his career. Although very successful, he was beginning to tire of the long hours and routine. He was excited at the opportunity to try something new, and was keen to teach.

Explanations for involvement in prison education programs offered by the academic educators were varied. They included being interested in prison education together with one respondent returning to prison education after working in a private venture. The other respondent's reasons for being involved was that he was offered a teaching position after applying to become a classification officer. However, the academic educators did face problems when they began work at the institution.

One of the major concerns raised by the academic educators was failure on the part of the prison administrators to orient them to the environment. The academic educators' comments indicate that their orientation to the institution was haphazard. One respondent was forewarned by an individual about the way to interact with the prisoners. In addition, this respondent had a "week of

getting used to things and preparing before I actually started in." The other respondent said, "The first time that I came out we had a sort of orientation; they showed us how some of the weapons were concealed. Inside a dictionary was a knife cut into the pages." Although the prison institution had taken some steps to accustom the academic educators it was interesting to note that the purpose and intent of the orientation was focussed on the workings and procedures within the prison, with importance being placed on security. No mention was made of the education programs available or of the institutional expectations concerning the educational or behavioural characteristics of the prisoner students. By not giving such information prisoner/educator interaction can be problematic. However, the academic educators' comments indicated that their interaction with the prisoners was very high.

The informaton presented by all of the respondents gave insight as to the problems experienced in working in the prison. The following section illustrates the issues and themes emanating from their comments.

#### 5.4 PROBLEMS FACED BY THE RESPONDENTS

It was obvious from the prison educators' comments that they lack the fundamental knowledge and understanding of adult education. Because of this lack of awareness as to

the benefits of, and strategies for adult education, an attitude of complacency on the part of the prison educators prevails. This complacency can lead to problems in determining their function and purpose within the penitentiary.

Concerns as to the reasons the professors gave for their involvement in the education programs at Stony Mountain indicated that they were not too sure as to their status with both prisoners and administrators. One professor said,

For me it was sort of a pioneering venture, because these were kinds of people I had never met before. While I found it terribly and emotionally draining and I would never do it again for some time, I was nevertheless intrigued to begin with.

It appears that curiosity and a sense of idealism and adventure are insufficient foundations for assuming professorial duties within a prison institution, as all three professors expressed concerns about certain prisoner behaviours. These included prisoner mobility in and out of the class, and the prisoners demanding immediate feedback regarding written work. In addition, commenting specifically on the environment a professor said,

I always noticed when the door was locked behind me. There was this sense of aloneness. It was odd to see everybody wearing the same colour, I

would look up and see clones of the same thing.

That took a long time to get used to.

Further indications of the professors' naive understanding of working in the prison were expressed through comments dealing with the function of prisons and the prison environment. They mentioned the presence of guards, students being withdrawn from class, and locking of doors. One said, "...you know when you do go out there you do notice that you are in a prison, you can't not." I was very aware when doors clanked behind you, guards look at you and you have passes." If prior knowledge as to the implications of working in the prison were available, then perhaps the professors could have overcome some of the initial and continuing concerns experienced at Stony Mountain. However, they were not given any formal orientation for working within the prison. Information was given in an informal manner.

Little if any structured orientation was given to the university professors prior to working in the institution. Information for working in the prison environment was obtained by two professors approaching other colleagues who had previously been involved with education programs at the institution. The information given to them was that they should not ask the prisoners what they were in prison for. It was also reported that most of the information was given

by one professor who had prior experience as a prison educator. This professor was very keen and enthusiastic in regard to the programs being taught in the prison, and in prison education in general. The bias and enthusiasm demonstrated by the experienced professor can lead to some confusion for the "new" university prison educators. By not being presented with subjective, relevant information as to the pros and cons of working in the prison environment, many professors can become disillusioned which can ultimately affect their interaction with the prisoners. However, this did not appear to have occurred with the professors in this study.

When discussing their relationship with the prisoner students, all of the professors praised their motivation to learn and the calibre of intellect the prisoners demonstrated. This was highlighted with reference to the spirited and heated class discussions. Although attempts were made to allow for interaction between the professors and prisoners, it was noted that the terms and process of the interaction were determined by the professors. This was evident in that all three professors played central roles in determining the nature of the discussions and the amount of time devoted to the discussions. One professor said,

One had to assume they had come from rather unusual social backgrounds and therefore, there was no point in presenting the subject matter in a

way one would to a middle class audience...I had to try and make it relevant to what I thought was their background. There was no point in talking about tremendous extractions or talking about matters that could come from fairly conventional society.

There were prisoner behaviours that did to varying degrees upset the professors during class times. These behaviours were related to student mobility and their actions of independently moving in and out of class. On the part of the students, the behaviours can indicate that they did not perceive the learning environment as threatening, and that they are able to come and go as they please. Generally, in adult education practice a student is encouraged to pursue classes based on his/her own interest or needs. Hence, if a prisoner decides to leave a class it can be seen that the student is either adhering to the practice of adult education, or is being rude, or is using school as a means of getting out of some other prison activity.

Another prisoner behaviour which concerned the professors was recognizing that sometimes the prisoners were depressed. All three professors made reference to the effects a denial of parole or judicial procedures have on the emotional stability of the prisoners. One professor relayed in some

detail the incidence of depression and explanations as to why the prisoners were depressed by saying,

You are dealing with a depressed audience of students. One senses that there is a kind of low level of not just depression, but also resentment, aggression, and hostility not towards me, but towards the world, the authorities or other inmates. In a sense it is a low level of a kind of impending violence. So all in all it is like teaching while walking into a prevailing wind all of the time.

The behaviours of certain prisoners affected the teaching strategies of the professors. It was interesting that all three professors based their teaching strategies on the class size. Their interaction with the prisoners were to a large extent influenced by the number of students in the class. All three professors mentioned that because the numbers in the class were so small, (all averaged 10 prisoner students) they opted for small group discussions and because of the small class numbers, two professors altered the classroom to allow for greater interaction in the class. This was achieved by the classroom chairs being arranged in a semi-circle to encourage discussions. Although the influence of the class size was paramount in the teaching environment for the professors, one professor was influenced by his personal, favoured style. The professor reported that,

I like to talk. I am loud and vocal and when I lecture I am all over the place which can be quite intimidating for the students. I have recognized that. My teaching style tends to be that I rant and rave and talk, and they listen. I am better at that than seminars.

The information from this professor would indicate that he is the central figure in the class presentation and limits interaction by the students. An interesting observation from the professor's comments was that by recognizing that he was the central figure in the learning process, he was indirectly making attempts to accommodate student interaction and sharing of the learning process. He concluded by saying, "...it (lecture style) does have its good and bad sides. But I have found this: while teaching out there, the students are more willing to stop me and ask questions."

It was evident that all three university professors did, at varying levels, attempt to implement most components of the adult education principle dealing with the provision of a conducive learning environment. This was particularly evident in relation to allowing for interaction through discussions, freedom of expression and encouraging learning. To a lesser degree building relationships of trust and helpfulness did not directly occur during classroom contact;

rather, it was found that they emerged from indirect conversations held with the prisoner students during coffee break.

While the analysis of the responses indicates that the professors do implement strategies for providing a conducive learning atmosphere, an overriding theme from the comments was that these strategies were introduced because of the influence of the prison environment. This environmental influence includes the prisoners, the building, the guards and the security procedures within the prison. That is, the prison environment did affect the provision of an environment conducive to learning. In addition to the effects of the prison environment for implementing the adult education principle concerning the environment, it was obvious from the professors' comments that little direct effort is made for sharing the learning process. One professor did mention that the prisoners did contribute to the flow and order of the class through discussions. However, determining whether this strategy is part of the adult education principle is debatable as the professor determined the thrust and direction of the conversation. This of course indicates that it was the professor who determined the structure and function of the learning process.

Although it is difficult to determine exactly why the professors were central to deciding the learning process, the researcher concludes that it may be because the professors believe their role should be central and authoritarian. That is, the professors perceive that they have the knowledge and skills to teach, and that their role is to transfer the knowledge to the learner.

It appears from the professors' comments that the prison environment affects their ability to implement the adult education principles dealing with the provision of a conducive learning environment. This was particularly evident in regard to the professors' comments concerning the guards, the need for passes, the prisoner mobility and the institutional process of withdrawing prisoners from class. There is a basic explanation for the overall lack of effort in administering the principles of adult education. The professors' understanding and awareness of the practice of adult education is very limited. Only one professor indicated that he had heard of the principles of adult education, but he could not elaborate specifically on their characteristics. Two other professors had no knowledge of the principles of adult education. The university professors involved in this study taught at Stony Mountain for the very short period of time of four weeks. In comparison, the vocational instructors averaged 18 years involvement in education at the penitentiary.

The structure of the apprenticeship programs directly affected three out of the four vocational instructors interviewed. Vocational courses are geared to apprenticeship programs and as a result three of the four instructors said their teaching methods were influenced by the requirements of the program. All of the vocational instructors verbalized the importance of practical work within their course because of the necessity for a specified number of hours in the practical setting. A policy of testing the prisoners before admission to the program was adopted by two vocational instructors because grade 9 or equivalent standing is required before commencing an apprenticeship program. This strategy attempts to ascertain the academic levels of the inmates. Another vocational instructor tests the prisoners; however, these tests are not intended to establish the educational levels of class members. They are designed to encourage and motivate the students. The instructor said, "I do it to encourage them to continue with the class." It was evident that all of the vocational instructors who tested, utilized the information from the testing to encourage and motivate students. The vocational instructors were using the information from the test battery to establish ways of working with the prisoners. Hence, the purposes of both testing methods are directly related to the adult education principle of providing a conducive learning environment.

One vocational instructor chose not to test the prisoners. Instead he observes the prisoner at work in the class and approaches the students individually if he sees any problems. This strategy incorporated interaction and support, both components of the adult education principle of providing a conducive learning environment. Through one-to-one discussions and demonstrations with the prisoners, the instructor is allowing for interaction and giving support and encouragement. All of the vocational instructors were influenced by the teaching strategy of demonstrations in interacting with the prisoners.

Demonstration is the most common teaching technique used in the vocational programs. Some instructors choose to work on an individual basis while others choose to demonstrate to the whole group. In addition to demonstration, the vocational instructors use audiovisual equipment. All of the vocational instructors mentioned the use of tapes, films and VHS presentations in their classes. Using the visual media was aimed at assisting those prisoners who had missed classes owing to institutional requirements, or if there was a lack of equipment or models to demonstrate a particular problem. Comments included, "If they have missed a couple of classes I schedule every second Friday for them to catch up. This may mean working with films, individually or with a group. It seems to work." Furthermore, "I use films and I have tapes to use a VHS. They can work on their own or I

can correct their work to assist them. I use the overhead projector."

There were problems associated with the use of audiovisual materials and reverting back to the classroom setting, as one instructor explained,

When we have run out of materials we revert back to the classroom. But you still have to give them some practical experience. The classroom work can become very boring, especially for inmates who dropped out of school....To sit them down and get them interested is very hard.

The use of audiovisual equipment and demonstrative teaching strategies allowed for successful prisoner/educator interaction. However, the vocational instructors mentioned that motivating the prisoners was problematic.

Motivating and encouraging the prisoners to learn causes the vocational instructors some problems owing to the influences of some prisoner behaviours and their educational abilities. This was evident in comments made in relation to the prisoners' maturity and attitudes to discipline. Variances in the prisoners' behaviour were mentioned in respect of institutional influences such as parole hearings or impending release dates. One instructor said,

The first couple of months are hard. He still hasn't gone through all of the court procedures.

He knows how much he has got, but he is still not sure how long. He may not like this particular place, or he may not know too many of the fellows. So you have to be kind of alert and just watch his movements.

Although the comments indicate that instructor awareness of those stressers being faced by the inmates demonstrate some concern and understanding of the prisoners' situation, references to "being alert" and "just watch their movements" infer that the instructor in this case, is influenced by the prison environment, specifically the prisoner's behaviour. The stresses faced by the prisoners are not only evident at the initial period of their confinement. They can prevail throughout their imprisonment and are also evident when their date of release is imminent. All of the vocational instructors identified and commented on the stresses that a prisoner inmate faces. Remarks included, "When a man is about to be released he is nervous." And,

I may have two fellows that are going up for parole hearings. All of a sudden one of them gets turned down. Now he comes back and he is all upset, yet you still have to make sure that the rest of the shop operates.

Two instructors commented on the lazy attitude of some prisoners and this laziness is equated to the maturity

levels held by most prisoners. Because of the lazy attitude held by a lot of prisoners in the class, one instructor has adopted specific teaching strategies to assist the students. He said,

I think that I am pushing them a lot of times because I notice that this is something that I see was lacking before. They are happier for it too, and they are grateful for it, you notice that too.

This indicates that the instructor is the central figure in determining the learning process. Although pushing the students connotes authoritarian and inappropriate strategies in relation to the adult education principles, the instructor does comment that the students are happier and grateful for this strategy. Perhaps in this particular instance, the instructor's strategy of pushing the students, which in theory is opposed to the principles of adult education, in practice has outcomes relevant to the purposes of adult education. That is, it caters to the needs of the students and provides guidance, support and encouragement.

The teaching strategies adopted by the vocational instructors determine their relationship with the prisoners. All four vocational instructors said that during their initial class with the inmates they indicate that they do not want to know reasons why the prisoners are there. This strategy would indicate that the vocational instructors are

endeavouring to provide a supportive learning environment by mentioning to the prisoners that they are not interested in their criminal history. Many prisoners may perceive that knowledge of their criminal activity may cause the instructors to be judgmental and prejudiced in their interactions with them. By indicating to the class that they are not interested in the prisoner's criminal behaviour the instructors are implementing those aspects of the adult education principle concerned with the learning environment which include trust and helpfulness, the withholding of judgement, and the encouragement of learning.

All of the vocational instructors discussed that when working with the prisoners in the shop, they did not alter their strategies, and taught the prisoners the same as if they were teaching their trade on the "outside". The vocational instructors' relationship with the prisoners is to a large degree influenced by the type of teaching strategy employed. These strategies include appropriate variations among classroom lecture presentations, demonstration techniques, and one to one interactions.

The four vocational instructors recognized the individuality of the prisoners. A consistent outcome from the individualized approach adopted by the vocational instructors was that many of the prisoners would bring some of the problems that they were facing to the attention of the instructors. One instructor said that,

There is a lot of confidential things that they won't tell me. I know that because that is the code. The things that they do tell is that it is almost impossible for them to learn something while they are in their cells. Some ranges are totally quiet because there are older guys...then if you end up on a range that has a lot of young guys that aren't taking educational programs and they have their radios blaring and their t.v.'s going, it is absolutely impossible to learn.

These comments indicate that the prison environment not only affects the vocational instructors, but all education personnel and the prisoner students. Hence, the prison environment does have major implications for implementing the adult education principles concerning the learning environment and sharing the learning process.

The function and purpose of the prison institution has influenced all of the vocational instructors when designing and working through their programs with the prisoners. As a result the opportunity to implement those strategies associated with the adult education principles of providing a conducive learning environment and sharing the learning process are dictated more by the demands of the institution. An example of this phenomenon is evident when the restrictions of the prison environment affects the running

of the vocational classes dealing with vehicles. Instructors are only permitted to work on the cars owned by the employed prison personnel. Institutional vehicles are serviced by an independent agency. Usually, the mechanical jobs required on the staff vehicles are major and too advanced for many of the students; thus, teaching the basics like an oil change is impossible. The motor mechanic vocational instructors are limited to the type of work they get. In addition, because of this lack of availability and variety in the conditions of the vehicles, opportunities for working in the shop on the same things that have been taught in the classroom are difficult.

Other problems included the prisoners leaving the class to meet with a visitor. All four vocational instructors discussed how this mobility of students affected their programs. Some students fall behind. The departure of others interrupts the flow of the demonstration. Additional problems resulted from their required duties as federal employees. The Canadian Correctional Services Employees are required to perform those duties related to security which can include frisking, searching, and reprimanding prisoners in addition to teaching. The contract staff are not required to perform these duties. Two vocational instructors commented on the conflict of their roles. One said, "We do a lot of frisking. When it comes down to it you have to be a correctional officer again. How can you do this and work in the classroom?" Another instructor said,

There are certain things that you hate doing although you must. Things like whenever the place is shut down and you are required to do a search. So we must go into each cell and search effects for contraband. Whether it is money or drugs it is not a nice situation. We don't enjoy doing that.

The four vocational instructors' comments indicate that they attempt in varying degrees to implement those strategies associated with the adult education principle concerning the environment. The variance in the implementation of the strategies was significantly determined by the prison environment, particularly with reference to the educational characteristics of the inmates and the workings of the institution in general.

The vocational instructors did not attempt to allow for the sharing of the learning process. The reasons expressed for not allowing this to occur were the demands of the Apprenticeship Authorities and variation in the educational levels of the prisoner students.

Of the four vocational instructors interviewed, only one indicated that he had studied the principles of adult education, and he said,

I very much now use the adult education approach.  
It has broken down some of the barriers. I use a

horseshoe setting and it works out well, I have more of an open line, I can get to them and talk with them. Little things like that seem to work.

Given that only one vocational instructor has any understanding or awareness of the principles of adult education and that indications from the vocational instructors' comments show some professional indifference to personnel and programs, the need for some introduction to adult education and strategies for implementing the principles of adult education appear justified. This information could assist the vocational instructors with their involvement with the prisoners and their colleagues, and coping with the demands of the Apprenticeship Board. The academic educators faced similiar problems and implemented similiar teaching strategies to the vocational instructors.

All three academic educators established good working relationships with the prisoner students by stressing flexibility within the programs, recognizing the importance of individuality within their classes and encouraging learning. A respondent commenting on relationships with the prisoner students said,

You can get into very deep relations with some people, especially in my situation where I am with the same group all day. It becomes a very

intimate situation, which can work positively or negatively. If you have someone who can't stand the fact that you are going to have to be with them for the next four hours, it can play on your nerves.

All of the academic educators' comments regarding their relationships with the prison students indicate that there are attempts to implement the adult education principle of providing a conducive learning environment. This was evident with references to respecting the individual, attempting to encourage learning, allowing for interaction and building relationships of trust and helpfulness. Although one respondent mentioned some negative aspects related to the teacher/prisoner interaction, the intent of this comment was to highlight some of the problems faced when attempting to administer some adult education principles in a prison setting. Because the interaction is on a continual basis, relationships can falter and negative implications can arise, which in turn can affect the teaching strategies used by the academic educators.

The teaching strategies implemented by the academic educators at Stony Mountain were based solely on recognizing the needs and educational levels of the prisoners. They were individualistic in content and presentation. This resulted in the classes being informal with either students

working independently or being involved in small group discussions. A respondent said, "My class for the most part doesn't have much to do with literacy. Mine is discussion based and most fellows who are illiterate use discussion as a substitute for that. In that way it becomes very less threatening for them."

The comments from the academic educators indicate that they are implementing those characteristics pertinent to the adult education principles concerning the environment and the sharing of the learning process. By recognizing the prisoners' illiteracy and compensating for this inadequacy by encouraging discussions, the academic educators are endeavouring to provide a conducive learning atmosphere through support, helpfulness, allowing for interaction and encouraging learning.

There are some prisoner behaviours that cause the academic educators problems in implementing some teaching strategies. These behaviours deal with student interaction. Problems arise with regard to the learning abilities of the prisoners. One respondent said that, "There is some peer pressure in class, but no more than in a public school. We have the advantage that we can eliminate a student if he causes a problem." Another respondent said,

I am really pleased that I have a couple of super classes where the natives have really blossomed

and they are unafraid to talk. But I also get the other turkeys, the immature guys who are on their first bits. Sometimes you have to be very careful to allow them to express their ideas but not to put anybody else down. My prime rule is 'no making nasty comments about anyone'.

Both comments indicate that at times the academic educators do have trouble with prisoner students taunting their peers. The inferences from the comments indicate that the teachers have adopted specific methods to deal with this problem, by reinforcing the rules or evicting the students from class. It would appear that these strategies are not cognizant of the adult education principles concerning the environment and sharing the learning process. This may be the case for the individual offender, but for the class as a whole, the strategies may be viewed as implementing components of the principles. By reprimanding or evicting a troublesome student prisoner, the academic educators are still allowing for interaction, but interaction is neither threatening nor demeaning. In addition, the atmosphere is encouraging learning for the whole group as opposed to an individual troublemaker.

It can be argued that the strategies of eviction or of reprimanding students are not allowing for freedom of expression, a specific element of adult education concerning

the environment. However, in terms of recognizing freedom of expression, compared to badgering and bullying their peers, or deliberately attempting to disrupt the class, questions of freedom compared to license arise. In light of both academic educators' comments, it appears that although they are respectful and mindful of the individuality of the prisoner students, there are occasions when, in order to ensure the group benefits in the educational environment, some individuals may have to be dismissed.

One observation made by an academic educator concerning the prisoners was in respect of their self image. Through observations, the teacher realized that he was dealing with self image, and a severe lack of self image for the most part. The respondent said, "Part of it is because of their previous experiences in education and part of it, because of all the negativity that goes on within the prison and that sort of thing." The comments from this academic educator sum up the implicit and explicit problems faced by all prison educators. Identifying the previous educational experiences and the problems that ensue from the prison environment, it can be seen that all prison educators are faced with many forces that can impede their attempts to assist the prisoners through education programs. Motivating the prisoners may help to overcome these obstacles.

Strategies for encouraging and motivating their prisoners to learn vary with each individual educator. One respondent said,

My prime motivating factor is that they are actually not just doing busy work while they are doing time, but they are doing something valid towards a high school diploma. And when they get out they can be half way through their grade 9 here, then they can jump right into classes at the Adult Centre. So once they realize that, it is probably the best motivating factor that there is. Most parole boards like to see people who have some things planned for the future once they get back into the street, and when they have proof that a prisoner has made progress and plans to continue, then it makes things better for the inmate. So I try and get that across to them. Sometimes they just shrug their shoulders but I try and get it through to them.

The other respondent commenting on motivating the prisoners said,

I focus on what they are going to do in the future. It is very much focussed on getting out and staying out. I will talk about what job prospects are going to be in say around 20 years from now. I mention that in an age of high

technology that maybe the jobs that they have always been able to get in the past aren't going to be in the future. So I hit them with a heavy dose of reality and then suggest that if there are other things that they want to do they are going to have to take further training.

Although the attempts to motivate the prisoners are practiced in the class, there are still some institutional workings which cause the academic educators problems when implementing their programs. All three academic educators commented on the removal of inmates for an administrative requirement. One respondent said, "Our students are constantly being called out for all kinds of reasons. To see their lawyer, to go for a visit [sic], to see a classification officer, we have constant interruptions..." Another respondent said, "Some students are taken out and of course nobody bothers to tell the contract staff; we are always the last to know." Additional comments as to the workings of the institution were made in relation to equipment and locking up. One respondent said,

A lot of the students are very artistic. Unfortunately, to this point there hasn't been any chance to develop that. Hopefully, in the future it will be. A lot of it has to do with the lack of supplies, or the fact that certain things would not be allowed inside the school. Another example

is the tape recorder machine. It is one of those things that is hard to keep; they use them to make tattoo machines.

Another respondent said, "The only thing that bothers me is having to lock things up; it is a bit of a pain." All of the comments demonstrate how the prison environment and the institutional workings affect the implementation and workings of the educational programs.

Acknowledging the interaction of prisoners and academic educators in conjunction with identifying the teaching strategies used by the prison educators makes it possible to recognize the attempts to implement the adult education principles. Of the three academic educators interviewed only one had undertaken any formal studies in the area of adult education. It cannot be denied that all three academic educators have attempted to promote strategies related to the adult education principle of providing a supportive learning environment. This was particularly evident from comments related to encouraging the students, allowing for interaction, and building relationships of trust and helpfulness. Those elements related to the adult education principle of sharing the learning process were evident with some of the students having the opportunity to decide on the learning materials through the development of sequential learning packages in the individualized programs.

One academic educator relied on discussions and student input into the program, but the educator maintained full responsibility for the discursive approach in that the educator decided on topics and conversation contents.

From all the comments made by the three academic educators, there is no doubt that the prison environment and its workings affect the implementation of the adult education principles that are concerned with the environment and sharing the learning process. However, as only one has studied adult education it appears that if the academic educators had a better understanding of adult education and the strategies for administering the principles of adult education, a lot of the problems they are currently facing might be overcome.

## Chapter VI

### CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to ascertain if the perceptions of prison educators involved in education programs at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary were comparable to the adult education principles of providing a conducive learning environment and sharing the responsibility for the learning process.

The investigation was based on open-ended interview questions directed to three groups of prison educators: university professors, vocational instructors, and academic educators. Information from the responses indicate that the incidence and systematic application of the principles of adult education by all three groups of prison educators is minimal.

From the data, the researcher determined that all of the prison educators interviewed attempt, to varying degrees, to implement some specific characteristics associated with the adult education principle of providing a conducive learning environment. However, inferences from the comments made by the prison educators concerning the adult education principle of sharing the responsibility for the learning

process indicated that the strategies associated with this principle were not implemented to any significant degree by any of the prison educators interviewed.

The level at which the prison educators did actively administer those characteristics common to both principles was influenced by the prison environment. The influences included the institutional workings, where prisoners are withdrawn from class to attend to visitors, and the physical characteristics of the prison, which include the presence of guards, locks, passes, restricted areas, cells, and the bars.

The university professors' efforts to implement the adult education principle of providing a conducive learning environment was generally determined by the class size. All three professors interviewed mentioned that their class numbers averaged around ten prisoner students. These small groups allowed for closer and more direct interaction. It appeared that the class size was the major influence that determined what strategies the professors used for providing a conducive learning environment.

In the question of sharing the learning process, the data from the university professors' comments indicated that there were no direct attempts to implement this strategy. One professor commented on how he relied on the prisoners' comments in class to determine the flow and structure of

discussions. However, this activity was performed intuitively and the prisoners had no direct input as to the format of class, or what they would like to study within the class.

The four vocational instructors equated the importance of providing a conducive learning environment to the facilities and room available to them. None of the instructors had any complaints about their teaching facilities and equipment. However, additional comments by the instructors indicated that they attempt to give the prisoners encouragement and support when they became involved in their classes. This was demonstrated by the instructors' comments with regard to their interactions with the prisoners.

No vocational instructor attempted to allow the prisoners to contribute to the learning process. Two instructors were very much opposed to this idea based on their commitment to the apprenticeship program, and also in relation to their shared belief that most of the prisoners were lazy and needed pushing.

The three academic educators demonstrated giving the prisoners encouragement and support in both the formal setting during class time and the informal setting during encounters at the coffee break period. However, unlike the vocational instructors, the academic educators are faced

with limited equipment for some of the programs. This limitation was in respect of the restrictions imposed by the penitentiary and certain behaviours practiced by some prisoners, which involved art classes and the use of tape machines for some remedial programs. The equipment may be stolen to make tattoo machines, and some of the supplies necessary for art can be used as weapons.

The academic educators interviewed indicated that their programs were very individualistic in nature as a result. Most of the classes allowed the prisoners to have some input for sharing the learning process. Prisoners could move through a set number of sequential class books independently and would only have to refer to the teacher if they were facing any difficulty. However, the choice of books was still authorized by the class teacher, and if the prisoners were not appearing to be working the teachers would assign them some work.

Only two of the 10 respondents have studied the principles of adult education formally. Most of the comments made by the prison educators in general indicate that the implementation and practice of those strategies associated with adult education are minimal. This seems quite a paradox in relation to the recommendations and reports concerning prison education that have been documented since 1936. All of the reports advocate that the

practice of adult education be implemented in federal penitentiaries, and that current and prospective prison educators be trained in the principles of adult education. It would seem that the Stony Mountain education authorities are not aware of this, given the small sample of those educators who have had some exposure to the study of adult education.

#### 6.1 RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE STUDY

In light of the lack of understanding and knowledge of the practice of adult education demonstrated by the prison educators at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary, and with respect to this lack of knowledge and awareness of the importance of adult education holds in studies regarding prison education programs in Canada, the following recommendations are made.

##### Recommendation 1: An Adult Education Workshop

A workshop dealing with the principles and practice of adult education should be offered to all of the prison education personnel currently involved in programs at the Stony Mountain penitentiary. The workshop should include details on how to work with adults in both academic and practical settings. The workshop should be

offered annually to the prison educators, with the administration timetabling the event so that all prison educators are able to attend.

There appeared to be very divergent reasons as to how the prison educators became involved with working at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. Of the ten educators interviewed, only one mentioned fiscal interests. Comments ranged from the intention of serving mankind, to being unsuccessful with one position and being offered another. The university professors had been approached by an independent person in an attempt to keep the university program functioning at the prison. There was no consistent policy for employing prospective prison educators at the penitentiary. This lack of consistency can cause problems, especially when a prospective educator is not aware what he or she is committing themselves to. This would include an awareness of the educational and personal problems that the prisoners experience and of the workings and function of the prison institution. Because of the divergence in employment strategies for prospective prison educators and in respect of the prison educators unfamiliarity with the prison environment and its workings, the following recommendations are made.

Recommendation 2: Personnel Qualified in Adult Education

All prospective prison educators should be employed in relation to their educational experiences and their experiences in working with adults. This knowledge and experience could benefit the employment authorities in their endeavours to appoint the most appropriate educational personnel. Applicants for such positions must have some basic understanding of the principles and practice of adult education.

Recommendation 3: Orientation to the Prison

Incoming and prospective prison educators must experience a formal and informal orientation to the penitentiary. The formal orientation would involve a presentation and discussion by a prison educator currently working in the institution. The prison educator could present information as to those implicit and explicit problems that the new teachers should expect to face when working in the institution. The informal orientation would involve the prospective educators having the opportunity to visit the institution, sit in on classes, and talk with the educators and the prisoners about what typically occurs in the learning environment.

Attempts to formally determine the academic levels of the prisoners are obtained by federal employees administering achievement tests. This information is not used by the university professors, is overlooked by the academic educators and is only used by two vocational instructors for determining the acceptance of prisoners into the apprenticeship programs. Based on the data, no consistent attempts are made to formally evaluate the prisoners as to their academic standings.

Furthermore, information from the comments made by the academic educators and the vocational instructors indicated that the prisoner students demonstrate a wide variety of educational levels and degrees of maturity. This was evident in terms of comments regarding the prisoners' self image and the impact of their maturity levels on their work and behaviour efforts in the class. Orientation to incoming prisoners as to those educational programs that are being provided in the prison may act as a catalyst to encourage the students to learn. Given the variance in prisoner student academic levels and the implications of their low self image, the following recommendations are made.

Recommendation 4: Program Awareness for Prisoners

The Stony Mountain education authorities should provide a regular orientation program for

prisoners. The program should include an introduction to the course from the educator, the educator's expectations of the prisoners, and the benefits that can be gained from being involved in the program. Formal educational assessment of the prisoner students should be administered by a trained educational diagnostician. The information should be reported to the prison educator in such a way that an understanding as to why the prisoner lacks certain skills becomes evident. Specific teaching strategies that can be implemented to overcome the learning problems should be suggested.

The diagnosis and observation of the prisoner students should be a continual process, in which the diagnostician should be permitted to enter the learning environment and observe the student at work. A policy of streaming the classes should be implemented in the institution. This would assist the prisoner students in their learning programs and the prison educators when organizing their classes.

#### Recommendation 5: Class Organization

The Stony Mountain federal penitentiary educational authorities should re-schedule classes

so as to cater to the needs and capabilities of the students. For those classes that are organized in respect of the apprenticeship authorities, the diagnostician should be responsible for recommending those prisoners who would be able to participate. Classes should be re-scheduled so that those prisoners who are able to perform to the standards of the apprenticeship authorities can pursue programs in that area. Students who cannot function at that level should still have the opportunity to become involved in a program that they are interested in, but are not hampered by the academic standing which they perceive they cannot attain. This strategy could act as an introduction to the program, and may act as a catalyst for encouraging those prisoners who are not sure what to become involved in.

The study of education in prisons has been in Canadian federal politics since 1936. Many investigations and reports as to education in federal prisons are available and could be of benefit to those involved in programs at the Stony Mountain Institution. Therefore, the final recommendation deals with the education authorities building up a library of information as to the research that prevails concerning prison education in Canada.

### Recommendation 6: Liaison with other Prisons

The Stony Mountain federal penitentiary educational authorities should actively seek out, maintain, and where possible implement the recommendations emerging from research in the area of prison education. In addition, an informal network with similar personnel in federal penitentiaries across Canada can also assist with program management and planning. The Matsqui program which involves a prison education program in conjunction with the Department of Education at the University of Victoria has proven to be very successful, attracting attention worldwide. Information from this program is readily available upon request.

### 6.2 IMPLICATIONS FROM THE STUDY

The implications from this study indicate that prison educators would benefit from an understanding of the implementation of the principles of adult education. The benefits of this awareness would be both implicit and explicit. The implicit gains for the prison educators would include a sense of guidance, assistance and help for the prisoners in their learning pursuits. The educators' work and efforts would be of aid to the prisoners in their

development, growth and preparation for release. An additional implicit benefit for the educators would be in respect of their professional relations with their counterparts. Adhering to the principles of adult education would allow for an understanding and appreciation of strategies, styles and programs implemented by their peers. This understanding could promote a sense of collegiality, respect and acceptance of particular strategies in a particular program.

The explicit gains for the prison educators through the implementation of adult education will be the gradual demise of problems arising out of current programs at Stony Mountain. Publicity, awareness and support from the prison administrative authorities regarding the benefits for the prisoners involved in prison education programs can lead to an alteration in the status of education, that is, it will be highlighted and gain relevant support in program design and implementation. This positive change in status could alleviate the existing problems of institutional workings impeding the progress and flow of current programs.

In conclusion, the prison educators and educational administrators at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary are to be congratulated for their efforts in working with such a unique clientele in a unique environment. There is a significant amount of research available to prison educators

regarding the typical educational characteristics of prisoners, the justification for adult education in prison and the need for more financial input into prison education program planning. However, there is a need for undertaking research on how adult education principles can be implemented into all of the prison education programs, from the university courses to the trades, and which teaching methods would be the most appropriate to foster adult education in respect of the adult prisoners.

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## Appendix A

### INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In order to answer the research questions the following interview questions were presented to the respondents.

In relation to the research question, what strategies are used by prison educators to ascertain the prisoners attitudes towards and experiences with education, the following questions were asked:

\* How do you establish the previous educational attainment levels and experiences of your learners? If no attempt is made, why?

\* How do you check the authenticity of the prisoner's responses? If no checking was done, the difficulty in verifying the prisoner's responses was explored.

\* When it is obvious a prisoners has advanced skills and/or knowledge, do you encourage them to use them? How?

The second focus of the research dealt with how the prison environment affects the implementation of the adult education principle of providing a learning environment that is comfortable, supportive, and conducive to learning. Questions included:

\* It has been reported that prisoners often tease, ridicule and torment their peers. If this behaviour occurs in your class, can you tell me how you overcome it?

\* Are there ever any occasions whereby prisoners are mood, tense and irritable; requiring your direct intervention? If so, what do you do to restore a relaxed working atmosphere?

\* Proving a comfortable, supportive, trusting learning environment in a prison environment can be difficult. Do

you attempt to alter the learning environment to accomplish any of these objectives? If yes, how? If no, can you tell me why?

The final research question was, what role do the prison educators play in implementing strategies relevant to the learners sharing responsibility for planning and working through the learning process. The interview questions in this area included:

\* Do you allow the students to choose what they would like to cover in class? If yes, how is this done? If no, why don't you?

\* What teaching methods do you implement into the classroom? Please elaborate on the application for the chosen method?

\* Do you encourage and motivate your learners in class? How?

Appendix B

LETTER TO PRISON EDUCATORS

Dear Prison Educator,

I am a graduate student in Education at the University of Manitoba. Presently I am undertaking studies related to the problems teachers face in working in a prison institution.

The current literature indicates that there are no teacher training programs for intending prison educators and very little, if any, support for those teachers presently involved in prison education programs. I hope that my research can act as a catalyst to eliminating this problem.

I intend to interview teachers currently working at the Stony Mountain federal penitentiary. All interviews will be treated as strictly confidential and the interviewees will be given a copy of the transcript to comment on before I proceed with the data. Arrangements for the interview will be made after I have received news of your interest in participating in the study.

Please fill out the attached form and return it to me in the stamped self-addressed envelope. I will be contacting those interested teachers immediately.

Should you require additional information do not hesitate to contact me in the Department of Educational Administration and Foundations, 474-9019, or at my residence, 269-6299.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Tricia A. Fox,  
Graduate Student

Appendix C

LETTER WITH INTERVIEW MANUSCRIPT

Dear (name included),

Enclosed is a copy of the transcript of the interview you gave concerning your work as a prison educator at Stony Mountain federal penitentiary.

Please read the transcript carefully and if you would like to change or leave out any of your comments do not hesitate to contact me at your earliest convenience.

I can be contacted in the Department of Educational Administration & Foundations, 474-9019 or at my residence, 269-6299. I would appreciate any notification of changes within the next ten days. If I do not receive any notice I will take it that you do not want to alter the transcript and I can proceed with the analysis.

Once again many thanks for your valued contribution to my research. Best wishes in your career in prison education.

Sincerely,

Tricia A. Fox  
Graduate Student