

THE PERSONAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND EMPLOYMENT
FACTORS WHICH INFLUENCE ADULTS TO OBTAIN
TRAINING IN AREA VOCATIONAL-
TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

By

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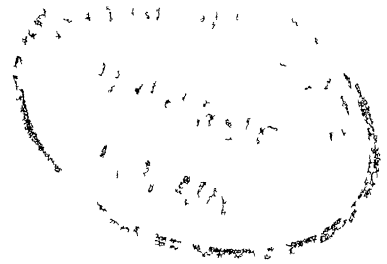
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

According to Rockhill (1976), "There is little doubt that we are in the midst of an adult education boom" (p 208) The educational system is in the midst of an "adult boom" because more "adult age" individuals are participating in educational activities

Adults have many reasons for returning to school Among these reasons are to further education and training for initial employment, to keep up with new information and new developments in jobs, and to prepare for future career changes (Walters, 1982)

Three major social changes have been identified as having had an impact on education One of these changes has to do with the fact that in today's society the more education people have, the more they want A second major social change which has had its impact on education has been the changing roles of women The result of this change is that more women are seeking and participating in educational activities, and more women are seeking employment or are already employed outside the home than ever before The third major social change relates to population demographics (Cross, 1980a)

Young (1975), in a special labor report, indicated that in October of 1974 approximately 15 million adults who were thirty-five years of age or older had enrolled in either high school or college, or were attending a vocational school Young specifically reported that of the

1.5 million students, two-thirds were enrolled in college and about 400,000 were attending a trade or vocational school. The remaining 80,000 students age thirty-five or over were enrolled in high school. Between 1965-74, according to Jennings (1975), there was a 149 percent increase in enrollment, or more than 8 million students. Of this number, the post-secondary enrollment had increased by 659 percent, or 1.5 million in 1974. Adult enrollment had a 49 percent increase, or more than 3.5 million students in fiscal 1974 (Jennings, 1975). In 1981, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (1983), there were 21 million participants in adult education.

Because of the large number of adults returning to school, "A major change is occurring in post-secondary education." (Rockhill, 1976, p. 208). Lewis and Blake (1978) further explained that

change taking place in post-secondary education is about as popular a mass movement as post-secondary education has ever experienced. The people responsible for the change share little in common with each other except for the fact that they are adult students who are continuing their education on a part-time basis (p. 51).

Adults once represented the minority in the educational system, but are becoming the majority as more adults return to school and the traditional school age population continues to decline. With the influx of adult students, the educational system as well as educators are being challenged to "accommodate them on their terms rather than on ours" (Otto, 1979, p. 4).

According to Cross (1980b), the shrinking 18-24 year old student population created a demand for special programs for adults, especially after 1970. Colleges have responded to the demand by increasing the number of noncredit offerings from 1,102 in 1967 to 2,225 in 1975.

The result has been an increase in part-time and noncredit educational activities

Participation in vocational-technical education has shown significant growth since 1966 (Digest of Education Statistics, 1975, 1983-84) The enrollment in federally funded vocational classes was reported to be 6,070,059 for all programs in 1966 and 7,047,501 in 1967 By 1970 the enrollment had increased to 8,793,960, and to 10,525,660 by 1971 By 1972 that figure had reached 11,710,767 The post-secondary enrollment in noncollegiate noncorrespondence courses for 1975 was shown at 1,399,100 for all programs, with an increase to 1,687,097 by 1981 (Digest of Education Statistics, 1983-84) This represented a 20.6 percent change between 1975 and 1981, and an 11.3 percent change for the years between 1966 and 1972 in federally funded education classes for all levels

The program areas with the most significant enrollment changes for 1966 to 1972 were home economics, office, and trades and industry The program areas with the most significant enrollment changes for 1975 to 1981 were business and office (38.1 percent increase), cosmetology and barber (28.9 percent increase), and trade (44.4 percent increase)

Statement of Needs

Adults returning to school have needs that are different from those of the traditional school age population Mangano (1978) stated

While adults' enrollment figures have risen steadily during the past decade, educational planners have not experienced a comparable increase in their understanding of these nontraditional students (p. 1)

Due to the increasing adult enrollment numbers, there is a need to identify the factors or reasons which have influenced adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools, and to use that information to best meet the needs of adult students in Oklahoma's area vocational-technical schools

Statement of the Problem

Historically, education has been concerned with the needs of traditional school-age students, but studies show that this group of learners is rapidly declining in numbers whereas the adult-learners group is rapidly increasing. The result is that adult learners are becoming the majority in vocational schools, making it necessary to focus concern on their unique educational needs. The problem, however, is a specific lack of knowledge about the personal, institutional, and employment factors which influence adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify the personal, institutional, and employment factors which influence adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools.

Research Questions

To achieve the goal of this study, the following research questions were formulated:

1 Is there a relationship between age and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment influences are considered?

2 Is there a relationship between race and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

3 Is there a relationship between sex and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when considering personal, institutional, and employment factors?

4 Is there a relationship between marital status and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when considering personal, institutional, and employment factors?

5 Is there a relationship between number of years in school and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when considering the personal, institutional, and employment factors?

Scope of the Study

Participants for this study were selected from five area vocational-technical schools which were randomly selected from a list of forty-one schools. Selection was made by use of a table of random numbers. The combined student population from all five schools used in the study was 657. Participants included students enrolled in day and/or evening classes and attending on either a full- or part-time basis.

Definitions

Adult Vocational Education A process by which adults prepare to enter an occupation, or upgrade or update a present occupation in order to benefit themselves, their families and their communities (Waiters, 1982, p 2)

Re-Entry Used to designate those individuals re-entering the educational system after being away for time periods ranging from only a few years to as many as twenty years or more (Mangano, 1978, p 2)

Nontraditional Students Used to describe a multiplicity of student groups including women and working adults seeking a career change or the updating of employment skills These are citizens of the community sampling the expanding offerings of the two-year college or individuals responding to an educational consciousness heretofore not sensed (Fadale, 1978, p 1)

Adult Anyone who has either discontinued or completed his formal education and is now trying to re-engage in the educational process (Smith, Aker, and Kidd, 1970, p 39)

Adult Education A process through which persons no longer attending school on a regular full-time basis undertake activities with the conscious intentions of bringing about changes in information, knowledge, understanding, skills, appreciation, and attitudes, or to identify and solve personal or community problems (Liveright, 1968, p 3-4)

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature was conducted prior to this study. The areas of concern were the demographics and the personal, institutional, and employment factors which influence adults to return to school, especially adult vocational students. A search of ERIC documents and current journals produced a number of sources, but most reported on adult students in two year junior colleges and the universities. Only a limited number of sources dealt directly with vocational students.

Demographics

Institutions of learning are feeling the impact of the "baby boom" as more adults seek and participate in educational activities. This new participation is timely in view of the declining enrollments in elementary and secondary education. Cross (1981) reported that the largest group in the U S population in 1980 was represented by those 15-29 years of age, but predicted that by the year 2000 the largest group would be represented by 30-44 year olds. She further stated "Individuals born during the baby boom are now between 22 and 34 years of age--the adult age range of greatest participation in educational activities" (p. 7).

The National Center for Education Statistics (1983) reported that in 1981 over 21 million adults participated in adult education. The

largest number of the participants, 35.5 percent, were among the 25 to 34 year old age group. The 35 to 44 year old age group represented the next largest group with 21.2 percent. The 17 to 24 year old age group comprised 18.5 percent participation in adult education compared to 13.3 percent for those persons 45 to 54 years of age. Two age groups represented less than 10 percent participation, the 55 to 64 year old age group with 8 percent, and the 65 year old and older group with 3.6 percent.

Adults have a choice of enrolling in nondegree-seeking programs or degree-seeking programs. In addition, participation may be full- or part-time. A National Center for Education Statistics' (1976) report on nondegree credit courses indicated that the total enrollment in the past has been composed of 50 percent part-time participants, and that this trend should continue through 1984. It was predicted, however, that enrollment in full-time nondegree credit courses would increase from 791,000 to 1,186,000 in 1984. A report by Kasworm (1983) further indicated an increase from 1,225,000 in 1964 to 1,854,000 in 1974 in first-time degree credit enrollment. The prediction was that by 1979 there would be an increase to 1,938,000, but that enrollment would drop to 1,704,000 by 1984.

Changing social roles in today's society is a second source of impact on education. Primarily women and older people are experiencing these changes. According to Darkenwald and Merriam (1982), between 1969 and 1975 there was a 45 percent increase in participation in education by women, and a 55 percent increase in participation by persons 55 years of age and older.

The impact created by the large numbers of nontraditional students enrolling in adult educational courses has been revealed by the

National Center for Education Statistics (1976), which reported that in 1964 there were only 5.3 million adult students enrolled in educational courses compared with 10.2 million in 1974. It was predicted that by 1984, 15.5 percent of the enrollment would be participants in occupational or general studies, an increase from a low of 6.2 percent in 1964 and 11.7 percent in 1974.

The third factor which has had a major impact on education is that the "educational attainment of our population is rising" (Smith, Aker, and Kidd, 1970, p. 7). Cross (1981) supported that statement by tracing the dramatic changes in educational attainment of the various age groups from 1940 until the present time. Cross (1981) further reported that in 1940, "Only half of the adults in the United States 25 years of age and older had completed elementary school" (p. 14), but by 1967 the "median school years completed had risen to 12" (p. 14). Today, the educational attainment in the United States is significantly higher. 84 percent of those 20-24 years of age have completed four years of high school or more. For people between the ages of 45-49, Cross reported "Only 66 percent have completed at least four years of high school" (p. 15). Today, in contrast to 1940, a majority of adults have completed high school "and 60-70 percent are likely to enroll in a post-secondary course" (Cross, 1981, p. 15).

Kasworm (1983) suggested that the rise in educational attainment is an important predictor of the impact of adult learner participation in continuing education. Also, individuals completing high school are more likely to engage in continuing education than those who have limited formal learning experiences (Kasworm, 1983, Cross, 1981).

Elliot (1969) maintained that "education is a continuous process" (p. 43), giving support to the concept of "lifelong learning" (Jessup,

1969). This concept suggests that individuals learn from infancy throughout their lives, and school must thus provide an education continuum. The focus in society is toward serving the majority of the people, and the majority, as Cross also pointed out, will be those age 25 and over (Cross, 1982).

Adult enrollment will continue to be an important future consideration, especially in view of the report by the National Center for Education Statistics (1977), which indicated a declining number of traditional school-age graduates. The report indicated that 1975-76 would be the peak years with an estimated enrollment of 3.1 million. The predicted enrollment in 1984-85 was to decrease to 2.7 million, an enrollment similar to that of 1964-65.

Thus, studies of people show that important changes in the educational system are forthcoming. Cross (1981) suggested that the changes will be in increases from elementary to secondary to post-secondary to adult education enrollments. These changes are related to the increased acceptance of the concept of lifelong learning as described by Jessup (1969). Obviously, the concept of lifelong learning combined with a spiraling adult population indicates that the adults' special educational needs, which are different than those of the traditional school-age learner, will become a vital concern to educational institutions.

Personal Factors

According to Kimmel (1974), every individual is different and each views his/her needs as unique. Likewise, in education, adults

have different needs for learning. This is further supported by Knowles (1980), who described the comparison between the concepts of pedagogy and andragogy. Adults, Knowles wrote, unlike younger students, engage in educational activities in response to an immediate need, and therefore with the perspective of immediate application of what they have learned. Adult learners tend to be self-directed and come with a reservoir of experiences which influence learning and the learning situation.

Several studies have been conducted to identify factors which influence adults to participate in learning activities. Studies to determine the importance of the reasons for participating in learning activities have also been conducted.

Morstain and Smart (1974) conducted a study of the reasons for adult participation in adult education. The study consisted of factor analysis of the Educational Participation Scale, which was administered to 611 students enrolled in several United States colleges. The study produced six factors: Social Relationships, External Expectations, Social Welfare, Professional Advancement, Escape/ Stimulation, and Cognitive Interest. The study identified various items within each factor which specified reasons for adult participation in adult education.

Factor I, Desire to Develop and Improve Social Relationships, was rated the most significant. Items included in that factor were personal association and friendship, meeting new friends, meeting someone of the opposite sex, participation in group activities, and sharing

with spouse, friends, or others. Factor III, Social Welfare, was concerned primarily with the need for self-improvement, to serve mankind and the community, and to improve previous education. Factor V, Escape/Stimulation, contained items specifying the need for escape from boredom and daily routine, escape to allow for time away from responsibilities, and escape from unhappy relationships.

Two factors seemed more closely related to employment: External Expectations and Professional Advancement. The needs expressed for Factor IV, External Expectations, were to be able to comply with instructions, suggestions, employer's policy and formal requirements, and to carry out the recommendations of some authority. Factor IV, Professional Advancement, listed the following reasons for participation in learning activities: to achieve higher job status for professional advancement, keep up with changes, increase competence, and to earn a degree, diploma, or certificate.

Factor VI, Cognitive Interest, listed three reasons for participation in adult education: The items related to learning for the sake of learning, acquiring knowledge, and satisfying an inquiring mind.

The National Study, sponsored by the Commission on Nontraditional Study in 1974, was conducted by Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs (1974) to determine the reasons for adult participation in adult education. The study included seven factors developed by Burgess in 1971, and two additional factors developed by Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs (1974). In the study, the respondents were assigned to two groups, the Would-Be-Learners, and the Learners. The Would-Be-Learners were asked to indicate the importance of each reason on their intention to participate in

adult education The Learners, on the other hand, were asked to indicate which of the items were reasons for their present participation in adult education The three reasons rated highest by both the Would-Be-Learners and the Learners were Knowledge Goals, Personal Fulfillment, and Personal Goals, respectively

When Knowledge was cited by the Would-Be-Learners as the reason for participating in adult education, most frequently it was to become better informed (56 percent) and to satisfy curiosity (35 percent) Personal Fulfillment was cited next in importance This included the desire to be a better parent and/or spouse (30 percent) and to become a happier person (37 percent) The third reason in order of importance was Personal Goals, which included, for the Would-Be-Learners, getting a new job (25 percent), getting a certificate or license (27 percent), getting a degree (21 percent), and advancing in present job (17 percent)

The three most frequent reasons indicated by the Learners for their decision to participate in adult education were Knowledge, Personal Fulfillment, and Personal Goals For knowledge, 55 percent indicated to become better informed and 32 percent indicated to satisfy curiosity The second most frequent reason cited by the Learner was Personal Fulfillment, which included to be a better parent and/or spouse (19 percent) and to become a happier person (26 percent) The third most frequent reason indicated was Personal Goals, which included advancement in present job (25 percent), to get new job (18 percent), to attain a degree (9 percent), and to get a certificate or license (14 percent)

In the Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs (1974) study, six other reasons were indicated by both the Would-Be-Learners and the Learners. These reasons were not rated in the same order by the Would-Be-Learners as they were by the Learners.

Among the reasons cited by the Would-Be-Learners were those related to Community Goals, which included to become a better citizen (26 percent), and to work for solutions to problems (16 percent). Obligation Fulfillment was also cited, especially as it related to meeting educational standards (13 percent) and to satisfy employer (24 percent). Social Goals cited included the importance of meeting new people (19 percent) and feeling a sense of belonging (20 percent). Escape Goals was recognized as the means for getting away from routine (19 percent) and getting away from personal problems (11 percent). The two least important reasons were Religious Goals, which expressed the need for serving the church (12 percent) and furthering spiritual well-being (20 percent), and Cultural Knowledge, which was rated 8 percent.

The additional reasons indicated by the Learners included Obligation Fulfillment, which expressed the need to satisfy employer (27 percent) and to meet educational standards (4 percent). Escape was the next reason, to get away from routine (19 percent) and to get away from personal problems (7 percent) were indicated. Social Goals for the purpose of meeting new people (18 percent) and to feel a sense of belonging (9 percent), and Religious Goals for furthering spiritual well-being (13 percent) and serving the church (10 percent) were the next series of reasons. The last two reasons the Learner cited for participating in adult education were Community Goals, including to

become a better citizen (11 percent) and to understand community problems and work for solutions (9 percent each), and Cultural Knowledge Goals (8 percent)

The National Center for Education Statistics (1975) reported that among the many reasons cited by adults for participation in adult education were personal and family interests. The report showed that 19.8 percent of the participants in 1969 cited personal and family interests compared to 23.5 percent in 1972, and indicated a steady increase for the following three years to 27.7 percent for 1975. The report further showed that social and secretarial reasons were cited by 6.7 percent of the participants in 1969, with a drop to 6.5 percent reported for 1972. By 1978, an increase to 7.8 percent was again reported.

As Cross and Valley (1974) noted, adults are a diverse population with similarly diverse learning needs. The challenge, then, is for the educational community to help adults overcome personal limitations and to encourage greater participation in adult education activities.

Institutional Factors

With adults in large numbers returning to school, the educational institutions, traditionally concerned with school-age or college-age populations, are being forced to recognize and meet the needs of the adult learner. Fredericksen (1983) observed that the "educational institutions are just now starting to feel the sociological impact of the millions of adults who realize that education does not end with a college degree but is a lifelong process" (p. 9).

The surge of adult students enrolling in educational activities and the declining enrollment of the traditional school-age student population are forcing education institutions to remove barriers to adult learners. However, as Mangano (1976) observed

While the adult enrollment figures have risen steadily during the past decade, educational planners have not experienced a comparable increase in their understanding of these nontraditional students (p. 1)

Mangano continued

The challenge is not to simply absorb adult students into extant academic programs, but to recast the total institutional efforts to facilitate adults' successful return to participation and completion of formal study (p. 2)

Due to the influx of adult students, various studies have been conducted to assess educational practices and adult students' needs. One such study was conducted by the Commission on Nontraditional Study (Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs, 1974). The study determined that adults returning to school want some kind of certification or recognition for their learning. Of the participants in the study, 21 percent of the Would-Be-Learners preferred a certificate of completion and 20 percent preferred a skill certificate. The learners preferred receiving a certificate of satisfactory completion (15 percent) or a skill certificate (7 percent). Of the Would-Be-Learners preferring credit for educational activities, 5 percent expressed a preference for a high school diploma, and 17 percent preferred a college degree.

Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) suggest that adult education is related to real life situations, and that several personal characteristics, such as age, sex, marital status, income, and occupation, influence the subjects that adults pursue. Furthermore, Cross (1980) maintains that adults want practical education that will help them to

succeed in the world. There is considerable data to support these observations. In 1981, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (1983), participants in adult education took some 37.7 million courses. Of those courses, 22.9 percent were in business, 13.8 percent in health, and 9.8 percent in engineering. In addition, 1.7 percent of the courses were in education, and 7 percent in philosophy, religion, and psychology.

Interestingly, the study by the Commission on Nontraditional Study (Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs, 1974) indicated that participants, Would-Be-Learners and Learners, differed in their choices of subjects when asked to indicate those subjects which would be of interest to them, and to rank them in priority order. Would-Be-Learners, it was found, selected vocational courses as their first choice (43 percent) followed by hobbies and recreation and general education (13 percent). Home and family living courses were chosen next (12 percent), followed by personal development (7 percent). The subjects, however, that were being studied by the Learners showed that their first choice was hobbies and recreation (42 percent). Vocational subjects (35 percent) and general education (25 percent) were their second and third choices, respectively.

Obviously, adults participating in adult education seek courses that are available during times when they can attend. Ruyle and Geiselman (1974) reported that flexibility of time and place had become a priority in some institutions, with three out of five institutions allowing students to enroll on a part-time basis to complete their program of study. Another change which facilitated adult participation related to flexibility in the use of course work completed on other

campuses, with one out of three colleges allowing credit for that type of work. Another key factor in encouraging adult participation related to the practice of allowing adults to enroll in classes at any time, not at the beginning of the semester only. Again, one out of three institutions were making such allowances (Ruyle and Geiselman, 1974).

To encourage still greater adult participation, institutions have begun scheduling classes during the evening as well as during the day. Scheduling, according to Cross (1981), can be handled in a variety of ways, including daytime, evenings, block time, and others. Cross suggests that 40 to 60 percent of adult participants prefer evening hours over morning hours. Scheduling of learning activities during hours that are convenient continues to be an important factor in adult decisions to participate in educational activities.

Convenience of the learning location is another prime consideration to adults. According to the Carp, Peterson, and Roelfs' (1974) study, the preferred locations indicated by Would-be-Learners remained the traditional settings of the public high school (16 percent), followed by the home, public two year college or technical institute, and the community free school (10 percent each). The remaining locations of choice were the private vocational, trade, or business school, and the four year college or university (8 percent each). The percent of Learners using various locations were home (17 percent) and employer (13 percent), followed by the public high school (9 percent). Cross (1981) stated that preference for the learning location is influenced by the level of educational attainment of the individual. College graduates and post-graduate students, he states, prefer college sites more than do people with less educational attainment. Cross (1981)

further suggests that learners are more apt to use college sites as compared to sites used by the potential learners. Of all the learning locations, school buildings continue to be the most preferred.

Another way to facilitate adult participation has been to lower the tuition for adult learners, or in other cases, to not require part-time students to pay full tuition for courses. Ruyle and Geiselman (1974) found in their study that some institutions were already reducing the tuition rates for part-time students.

Financial assistance is yet another way to facilitate adult participation in adult education. Ruyle and Geiselman (1974) reported that six out of ten colleges and universities and seven out of ten two year institutions are providing some kind of financial assistance for students earning their degrees on a part-time basis. Financial assistance from two year colleges has been in the form of scholarships and nonpayable grants (59 percent), work study (49 percent), and reserve NDEA and federally insured loans (45 percent). It was also reported that senior colleges and universities have been providing financial assistance in the form of scholarships and grants (47 percent), work study (42 percent), and others.

Employment Factors

Individuals have, throughout history, sought to learn ways to improve their participation in the world of work.

Work has enabled man to satisfy his ever-increasing needs and wants. Man learned early in his history that he could improve his lot by means of work. He also learned early the ways in which he worked affected his output and efficiency (Roberts, 1971, p. 22).

Work, according to Drucker (1978), "is a psychological and social necessity for man " (p 289) Historical developments since colonial America have shown that as the needs of the workplace have changed, so have the needs for knowledge Education has responded by establishing and making available programs to meet those needs

Legislation has been passed to meet the educational demands created by the rapid changes in the workplace One significant piece of legislation was the passage of the Morrill Land Grant Act of 1862 (Roberts, 1971) The act was in response to the need for "technically trained agricultural workers" (Roberts, 1971, p 34) Another significant piece of legislation was the passage of the Smith Hughes Act of 1917, for the purpose of providing federal funds for "reimbursement for vocational agriculture, home economics, and vocational industrial education" (Roberts, 1971, p 6) The Manpower Development Training Act of 1962 was another significant development in that it aimed to "reduce unemployment and underemployment of the disadvantaged" (Roberts, 1971, p 343) Other important developments, according to Roberts (1971), included the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, which provided "assistance to socio-economically disadvantaged persons" (p 128), and the Vocational Education Acts of 1963 and its subsequent amendments, especially the 1968 amendments which, in effect, provided "vocational programs for people of all ages needing training or re-training" (p 114)

The Elementary and Secondary Education Amendments of 1966 provided legislation directly addressing adult education concerns The act provided for

Adults 18 years of age or older whose inability to speak, read, or write the English language constituted a substantial impairment of their ability to get or retain employment (Roberts, 1971, p 129)

More recent legislation, which has had further impact on education, has been the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) of 1973. This act provided for local and state governments to make decisions as to which training and employment programs to support (Evans and Herr, 1971). The Job Training Partnership Act of 1983, which replaced CETA, called for a joint effort between vocational education and the private sector to provide service to economically disadvantaged persons and training programs for people who were unemployed (Riffel, 1984).

Rapid technological change and its effect on the development of new industries has created the need for a new kind of worker, the knowledge worker. Knowledge, as Drucker (1978) has written, will not make work disappear nor permit skills to be eliminated, but rather will create its own demand.

The impact of the demand for knowledge has been made evident by the increased number of adults who have enrolled in vocational education to obtain training or upgrading of job skills. This is illustrated by the National Center for Education Statistics (1982) report, which indicated that in 1960 there were 93,000 students enrolled in reimbursed post-secondary vocational programs. By 1965 there had been an increase to 207,000, and by 1979-80 a further increase to 501,068.

Walters (1982), in a report on vocational education, stated that vocational education has changed to meet the needs of the growing number of adults participating in educational activities. Adults returning to school are unique individuals with unique needs, and have many

employment-related reasons for seeking educational activities. The National Center for Education Statistics (1975) reported reasons given by adults for participating in adult education. The report indicated that in 1969 "to improve or advance in current job" was the reason given by 45.2 percent of the respondents. In 1972, the respondents rated the same reason 42.7 percent, showing a decline in its importance. By 1975, an even greater decline was noted when the respondents rated the same reason 41.8 percent. Another reason reported by the Center was to "get a new job." This reason was rated by 10.9 percent of the respondents in 1969 compared to 11.3 percent in 1972 and 11.5 percent in 1975.

Another report by the National Center of Education Statistics (1974) showed that personal or family interests were given as reasons for seeking adult education by at least 58.8 percent of unemployed women. Interestingly, to improve or advance in a job was given as a reason by 28.5 percent of women who were already engaged in clerical work. The same reason was indicated by 25.1 percent of women who were vocational, elementary, or secondary teachers. Of the men who were participating in adult education and who cited the reason to improve or advance in a job, only 6.5 percent were vocational, elementary, or secondary teachers, however, 20.7 percent were craftsmen or in related occupations. Among managers and administrators, there were 15.1 percent and 17.7 percent in professional or technical occupations who indicated this as a reason for participation in educational activities.

Cross (1981) suggested several job-related factors which have influenced adults to engage in vocational-education. One factor is that jobs often become obsolete due to rapid changes in technology,

forcing workers to seek learning opportunities to prepare for changes in the workplace

Another factor influencing adults to engage in job-related education is the impact of changing demographics. Adults are living longer and are competitive in the job market past mandatory retirement age. The increased life span of workers is having its impact on education as more older adults seek employment opportunities. Job competition, according to Cross (1981), requires workers to continually attain higher levels of education.

Certain groups, such as minorities, women, and the elderly, who are seeking jobs in today's labor market, want challenging jobs and learning opportunities. According to Cross, changing jobs has become a more comfortable and acceptable process, therefore, seeking educational activities to meet those needs will continue to influence adults to engage in education for jobs.

As technology continues to change rapidly, so will the requirement for the workplace. Working adults will continue to feel the impact as

Leaving and re-entering the educational system will likely become more common because of new demands from existing jobs. The future employment market will require employees to adapt to changing technology, employment patterns, and job opportunities (Human Resources on Demographics, 1980, p. 27)

Summary

The review of literature has shown that adults are, in large numbers, seeking out and participating in educational activities. The increased influx of adult learners has been attributed chiefly to the "baby boom" and rising educational attainment of the present society.

(Cross, 1981) Leaders in the educational community have felt, and will continue to feel, the need to change to serve the needs of nontraditional students, especially in view of the increased number of adult students compared with the declining enrollment figures for traditional school-age student populations

The review of literature has further shown that adults returning to school have many reasons for participation (Cross, 1981) Adults are unique, motivated, voluntary, and practical (Cross, 1980), and thus different from the traditional school-age student The overall need, then, is to gain better understanding of adult educational requirements, to help them overcome barriers, and to make efforts to increase and encourage more adult participation (Mangano, 1978)

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to identify the personal, institutional, and employment factors which influence adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools

This chapter includes the selection of the sample, design of the instrument, collection of the data, and statistical procedures

Selection of the Sample

The 657 participants used in this study were adult students enrolled in five area vocational and technical schools located throughout Oklahoma. The five area schools, composed of two urban and three rural, were randomly selected from among 41 area schools. Participants included adults enrolled either as daytime or evening students and attending on a full- or part-time basis.

Design of the Instrument

The instrument used for this study was a 42-item questionnaire developed by the researcher. The design of the instrument was initiated after a review of the literature and various research sources (Van Dalen, 1979, Popham and Sirotnik, 1973, Kerlinger, 1973, Key, 1984), and consultation with several educators in both vocational education and at the two-year junior college level. The first draft was

completed in October, 1984, and submitted to four vocational administrators, one placement officer in vocational education, and one college administrator. The six people were asked to examine the instrument for clarity, sequencing, appropriateness, and deletions or additions of statements. Two recommendations were submitted: (1) change the wording of the statements to less technical words, and (2) simplify the rating scale to facilitate understanding of what the participants were being asked to do.

The second draft, corrected according to the recommendations, was prepared and submitted for validation to a research design professor and three faculty members of the Occupational and Adult Education Department at Oklahoma State University. The questionnaire consisted of two major parts: (1) the personal, institutional, and employment factors which influenced the adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools, and (2) general information.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of a list of factors obtained from the review of literature and from suggestions and recommendations made by several educators. The 42 specific items considered in the study were divided into three major areas: personal, institutional, and employment. The items from the three major areas were dispersed among the 42 items to obtain more reliable answers. The items included in the personal part were as follows:

- 1 The challenge of new experiences
- 2 Opportunity for success
- 3 Challenge of school
- 4 Opportunity to meet new people
- 5 Opportunity to increase income

- 6 Challenge of tests
- 7 Opportunity for acceptance by family, peers, and others
- 8 Family encouragement
- 9 Personal desire
- 10 Improvement of level of education
- 11 To get away from home
- 12 Challenge of working with younger students
- 13 Challenge of competing with younger students
- 14 Personal improvement

The institutional factors included

- 1 Tuition is within my means
- 2 The best class for me is available
- 3 V A approved
- 4 Job placement services are available
- 5 School accredited
- 6 Child care center at school
- 7 Publicity ads
- 8 Faculty willing to work with adults
- 9 Classroom work only
- 10 On-the-job training offered
- 11 School reputation
- 12 Part-time enrollment is available

The employment factors included

- 1 Job security
- 2 To learn a new job
- 3 To have more job responsibilities
- 4 To have a part-time job

- 5 To advance in a job
- 6 The challenge of retraining
- 7 Employer encouragement
- 8 Time off from work available
- 9 Reimbursed for attending school
- 10 To train for a first job

The participants were asked to indicate the amount of influence each item had on individual decisions to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools. The participants' responses were marked on a scale of five levels numbered from 4 (much) to 0 (none). The five levels were labeled as follows:

Level 4 Much influence - one of the main reasons I am in the class

Level 3 Quite a bit of influence - not a main reason, but certainly considered important

Level 2 Some influence - this added to the reasons I am in the class

Level 1 A little influence - I did consider this when I decided to join the class

Level 0 No influence - this reason had no effect on my decision

The second part of the questionnaire asked general information concerning age, race, sex, marital status, employment status, years of school completed, program in which enrolled, and status before enrolling in the present program.

The research coordinator at the Oklahoma State Department of Vocational and Technical Education assisted with completion of the

final draft of the questionnaire (Appendix A), which was approved by the committee and dissertation chairperson on October 7, 1985

Collection of the Data

Five area vocational-technical schools were randomly selected using a table of random numbers, and a letter (Appendix B) sent to the superintendent of each school. A copy of the questionnaire was enclosed with the letter to allow each superintendent an opportunity to examine the instrument before agreeing to participate in the survey. All five superintendents responded. As stated in the letter, a telephone follow-up was conducted to obtain a definite confirmation on the superintendents' intent to participate. All five agreed, and during the telephone follow-up, arrangements were made for a person from the individual school sites to assume responsibility for administration of the questionnaire. Questionnaires were to be mailed to three schools, one offered to duplicate the questionnaire sent with the initial letter, and the other school requested the researcher bring the questionnaires to the participating school and meet with the person who would administer the survey. A copy of a letter that could be read to the participants prior to administering the questionnaire (Appendix C) was made available to each school. All the participating schools were provided with self-addressed stamped envelopes for returning the completed questionnaires. All completed questionnaires were received by January 2, 1986. The total sample was 632 out of 657, a response of 96 percent.

Statistical Method

A subscore was obtained for each of the three dependent measures (personal, institutional, and employment) by summing the scores of each item and dividing by the total number of items. Analysis of variance was used to analyze the data. The alpha level was set at 0.05. This method was chosen in order to determine the relationship of the independent variables (age, race, sex, marital status, and number of years in school) on the dependent variables (personal, institutional, and employment). A post-hoc Scheffe (alpha set at 0.10) test of comparisons and Eta Squared test of strength were done. The means for each of the items were calculated to rank the 42 items.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to identify the personal, institutional, and employment factors which influence adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools. The demographic information and the results of the data will be presented in this chapter.

Demographics

The total population consisted of 657 adult students enrolled in five area vocational-technical schools, two of which were rural, located throughout Oklahoma. Of the 657 questionnaires returned, 25 had missing data, leaving 632 usable questionnaires. The response rate was 96 percent. Students included in the study were enrolled in both day and evening classes and attending either on a full- or part-time basis.

The sample was divided into groups according to age, race, sex, marital status, and number of years in school (Table I). These groupings were helpful in describing the sample. Two additional questions were asked of the participants which were not part of the research questions but were of interest in describing the demographics. The two questions related to program(s) in which the students were presently enrolled, and their status before enrolling in the program.

TABLE I
DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Sex	N*	Age	N	Race	N	Marital Status	N	Years in School	
								N	N
Male	207	18-28	271	Indian	47	Single	164	8-	18
Female	425	29-39	127	Black	29	Married	348	9	19
		40-49	101	White	438	Divorced	110	10	30
		50-59	60	Other	118	Widowed	8	11	44
		60+	40					12	340
								13	77
							14	50	
							15	16	
							16+	34	

*N = Number of participants

Note Due to missing data, the sum of each column does not equal 632

Since the only criterion in the selection of the schools was that at least two would be urban, it was important to determine if any difference was found between the adults enrolled in the two different school settings. It was found that employment factors were of greater significance to the adult students, however, personal and institutional factors were not found to be significant. The results also indicated that employment factors were of more importance to students in the rural schools than to those in urban schools.

Table I shows that a significantly greater representation was by females. The grouping by age indicates that as the age of the individual increased, the number of participants in each age group decreased. The grouping for race was significant in that there were only 47 Indian and 29 Black adult students. It was interesting to note that the number of participants indicating "other" for race were considerably more than the number of Indian and Black combined. This finding may indicate that race played a significant role in the adult students' decisions to enroll in area vocational-technical schools.

When looking at marital status, it was found that the majority of the participants were married. That grouping was followed by those who were single, and then by those who were divorced. This information may indicate that marital status had an influencing effect on adult participation in vocational-technical education activities.

In the grouping according to the number of years in school, the majority of individuals had at least 12 years of school followed by those with 13 or 14 years of school.

The information obtained from Table I indicates that the largest number of participants were female, age 18-28, white, married, and with an education level of 12 years.

In describing the sample by programs, it was found that adults were enrolled in 48 different programs (Table II). The two programs with the largest enrollment were practical nursing and secretarial training. In each of these programs, only one student was male. Data processing (IBM/System 34 Microcomputers) and beginning typing were the two programs with the next largest enrollment.

TABLE II
LIST OF PROGRAMS AND THE NUMBER OF MALES
AND FEMALES ENROLLED PER PROGRAM

Program	Male	Female
ABC Shorthand	0	19
Accounting	0	9
Aero Mechanic	3	0
Air Conditioning/Refrigeration/Heating	21	6
Banking	1	14
Basic Bookkeeping	1	6
Basic Floriculture	0	12
Basic Upholstery	3	4
Beginning Typing	3	39
Brick and Masonry	5	1
Business Management	0	1
Cake Decorating	0	1
Carpentry	7	4
Child Development I	0	3
Child Development II	0	3
Commercial Art	4	11
Data Processing IBM Personal Computer	5	18
Data Processing IBM/System 34 Microcomputer	4	43
Diesel I	8	0
Diesel II	3	0
Drafting	6	4
Electronics Basic Electricity	23	4
Electronics Programmable Controllers	30	1
Emergency Medical Technician	8	5
Fashion Design/Clothing Production	0	2
Food Service	1	0
GED	3	6
Intermediate Bookkeeping	0	4
Intermediate Typing	0	7
Industrial Electronics	9	2
Introduction to Microcomputers	2	5
Machine Shop I, II	2	2
Medical Assistant	2	14
Medical Laboratory Assistant	0	3
Medical Secretary	0	7
Microcomputer Operation Programming	12	18
Nurse Assistant	0	8
Oil Painting	4	8
Photography	1	1
Plumbing	3	0
Practical Nurse	1	51
Printing	1	0
Respiratory Therapy	0	4
Secretarial Training	1	50
Self-Hypnosis	1	8
Small Engines	14	2
Surgery Technician	0	9
Tax Preparation	0	3

From the information obtained according to the programs students were enrolled in, it can be shown that traditional enrollment patterns continue to exist. Programs which have traditionally been female oriented (shorthand, accounting, basic floriculture, child development, fashion design, bookkeeping, and health related courses) continue to attract mostly female students. Likewise, programs which have been traditionally male oriented (aero mechanics, diesel mechanics, and plumbing) continue to attract mainly male students (Table II).

The status of the students before enrolling in the present program is shown in Table III. As indicated, more females than males were attending school prior to enrolling in the present program. Not surprisingly, there were more males in the military than females. In the area of unemployment, there were almost six times more females than males. In comparing the number of students employed full-time, there were more females than males. There were more females than males identifying "other" as their status.

Table IV, which shows the classification of status for students indicating "other," indicates that four times as many females than males were employed part-time. Only females indicated "housewife" as their status. Three times as many females were self-employed as were males. Also, six times as many males than females were retired.

Table V is another source for describing the sample. The questionnaire allowed open response spaces in which participants could write other factors which had influenced their decision to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools. In all, 30 responses were obtained from the open response spaces.

TABLE III
 STATUS OF STUDENTS BEFORE ENROLLING
 IN PRESENT PROGRAMS

Status	Male	Female
School	31	33
Military	10	4
Unemployed	31	172
Employed full-time	124	177
Other	11	26

TABLE IV
 CLASSIFICATION OF STATUS FOR STUDENTS
 INDICATING "OTHER"

Status	Male	Female
Employed part-time	7	30
Housewife	0	28
Retired	13	2
Self-employed	3	10

TABLE V
 NUMBER AND AVERAGE RATING OF RESPONSES OBTAINED
 FROM THE OPEN RESPONSE ITEMS
 ON THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Student responses	Number of responses	Average rating
To fulfill desire of learning subject wanted	7	4 00
Instructors with positive learning atmosphere	4	4 00
Adults following student rules	4	1 75
Instructors know their jobs	3	4 00
Variety of subjects	3	4 00
Courses keep up with current business trends	2	4 00
Good equipment	2	4 00
Work at own pace	2	4 00
To be able to run own business	2	3 50
Medical careers offered	2	3 00
Better working conditions	1	4 00
To give to others - work with people	1	4 00
Size of class	1	4 00
Being older and having confidence	1	4 00
Husband being disabled	1	4 00
Guest speakers	1	4 00
More specialized and better program than college	1	4 00
Workman's comp recommended	1	4 00
Open entry - open exit	1	4 00
New technology	1	4 00
Continuing education in same or related field	1	4 00
No age limit	1	4 00
To have certificate	1	3 00
Modern office machines	1	3 00
To find job in other community	1	4 00
Spending valuable time working for few benefits	1	4 00
Children old enough to not need babysitter	1	3 00
Environment	1	4 00
More experience	1	4 00
Can be employed full-time while learning	1	4 00

Table VI contains the rankings of the 42 items which were dispersed among the personal, institutional, and employment factors. The table, in descending order, shows the amount of influence of each item. The table also shows that reasons for obtaining training in area vocational-technical schools were most often for personal improvement, personal desire, to learn a new job, opportunity for success, class hours convenient, and improvement of level of education.

Tables VII, VIII, and IX show the rankings for the items in each of the three factors (personal, institutional, and employment). When examining the personal factors, it was found that seven items, personal improvement, personal desire, opportunity for success, improvement of level of education, challenge of new experiences, personal need, and to increase income, were among the first 10 in the overall table (Table VI). Table VIII (institutional factors) indicates that only one item, class hours are convenient, was among the first 10 in the overall ranking (Table VI). The ranking of employment factors (Table IX), however, shows that three items, to learn new job, to have job security, and to advance in a job were among the first 10 in the overall ranking of the 42 items.

Results

An analysis of variance was done to analyze the data. The independent variables were age, race, sex, marital status, and number of years in school. The dependent variables were personal, institutional, and employment factors that influenced participation. An instrument composed of 42 items measured the amount of influence each factor had

TABLE VI
RANKING OF 42 ITEMS WHICH INFLUENCE ADULTS TO
OBTAIN TRAINING IN AREA VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS

Factor Number	Item	Means	Rank
42	Personal improvement	3 60	1
26	Personal desire	3 58	2
4	To learn new job	3 25	3
7	Opportunity for success	3 08	4
8	Class hours convenient	3 01	5
31	Improvement of level of education	3 00	6
1	Challenge of new experiences	2 92	7
29	Personal need	2 90	8
2	To have job security	2 83	9
16	To increase income	2 72	10
13	To advance in job	2 50	11
32	Faculty willing to work with adults	2 48	12
12	Location of the school	2 38	13
9	To have job responsibilities	2 36	14
5	The best class for me is available	2 31	15
18	Challenge of training	2 24	16
3	Tuition is within my means	2 09	17
6	Evening class is available	2 06	18
14	Opportunity to meet new people	2 00	19
23	Family encouragement	1 89	20
11	Challenge of school	1 78	21
40	School reputation	1 74	22
24	School accredited	1 62	23
41	Part-time enrollment is available	1 60	24
38	On-the-job training offered	1 55	25
22	Job placement services are available	1 50	26
17	Financial aid is available	1 29	27
19	Challenge of tests	1 24	28
25	Employer encouragement	1 20	29
15	Size of school	1 16	30
21	Opportunities for acceptance by family, peers, and others	1 16	31
10	Having part-time job	1 06	32
35	To train for first job	0 96	33
34	To get away from home	0 76	34
33	Reimbursed for attending school	0 74	35
30	Publicity/ads	0 71	36
37	Classroom work only	0 68	37
39	Challenge of competing with younger students	0 59	38
36	Challenge of working with younger students	0 55	39
20	V A approved	0 44	40
28	Time off from work is available	0 43	41
27	Child-care center at the school	0 20	42

TABLE VII
 THE RANKING OF ITEMS FOR PERSONAL FACTORS WHICH
 INFLUENCE ADULTS TO OBTAIN TRAINING IN
 AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL

Item number	Item	Mean	Rank
42	Personal improvement	3 60	1
26	Personal desire	3 58	2
7	Opportunity for success	3 08	4
31	Improvement of level of education	3 00	6
1	Challenge of new experiences	2 99	7
29	Personal need	2 90	8
16	To increase income	2 72	10
14	Opportunity to meet new people	2 00	19
23	Family encouragement	1 89	20
11	Challenge of school	1 78	21
19	Challenge of test	1 24	28
21	Opportunity for acceptance by family, peers, and others	1 16	31
34	To get away from home	0 76	34
39	Challenge of competing with younger students	0 59	38
36	Challenge of working with younger students	0 55	39

TABLE VIII
 RANKING OF ITEMS FOR THE INSTITUTIONAL FACTORS
 WHICH INFLUENCE ADULTS TO OBTAIN TRAINING
 IN AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Item number	Item	Means	Rank
8	Class hours are convenient	3 01	5
32	Faculty willing to work with adults	2 48	12
12	Location of school	2 34	13
5	The best class for me is available	2 31	15
3	Tuition is within my means	2 09	17
6	Evening class is available	2 06	18
40	School reputation	1 74	22
24	School accredited	1 62	23
41	Part-time enrollment is available	1 61	24
38	On-the-job training offered	1 55	25
22	Job placement services available	1 50	26
17	Financial aid is available	1 29	27
15	Size of school	1 16	30
30	Publicity/ads	0 72	36
37	Classroom work only	0 68	37
20	V A approved	0 44	40
27	Child care center at the school	0 20	42

on the student's decision to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools

TABLE IX
RANKING OF ITEMS FOR EMPLOYMENT FACTORS WHICH
INFLUENCE ADULTS TO OBTAIN TRAINING IN
AREA VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Item number	Item	Means	Rank
4	To learn new job	2 25	3
2	To have job security	2 83	9
13	To advance in job	2 72	11
9	To have more job responsibilities	2 36	14
18	The challenge of retraining	2 24	16
25	Employer Encouragement	1 20	29
10	Having part-time job	1 10	32
35	To train for first job	0 96	33
33	Reimbursement for attending school	0 74	35
28	Time off from work is available	0 43	41

Research Question Number One

Is there a relationship between age and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors and considered?

The results for personal factors by age (Table X) indicated that there was a significant difference among the five age groups When

looking at the means (Figure 1), it was found that age had a greater influence on personal factors on the 18-28 year old group. The amount of influence by age gradually decreased to ages 50-59, but increased for those aged 60 and over. The Scheffe test indicated a significant difference between the 18-28 and the 60 and over age groups, and the 18-28 and the 50-59 age groups. Eta Squared test of strength was 0.03, indicating that three percent of the variability in personal factors was due to age.

TABLE X
SOURCE TABLE FOR PERSONAL
FACTORS BY AGE

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	4	9.5	2.39	4.43	0.00
Within groups	624	336.14	0.54		
Total	628	345.70			

P < .05

In considering the institutional factors (Table XI), the results indicated that age was not an influencing factor in the adult's decision to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools.

However, the results indicated a significant relationship between age and employment factors (Table XII). The means (Figure 2) shows that

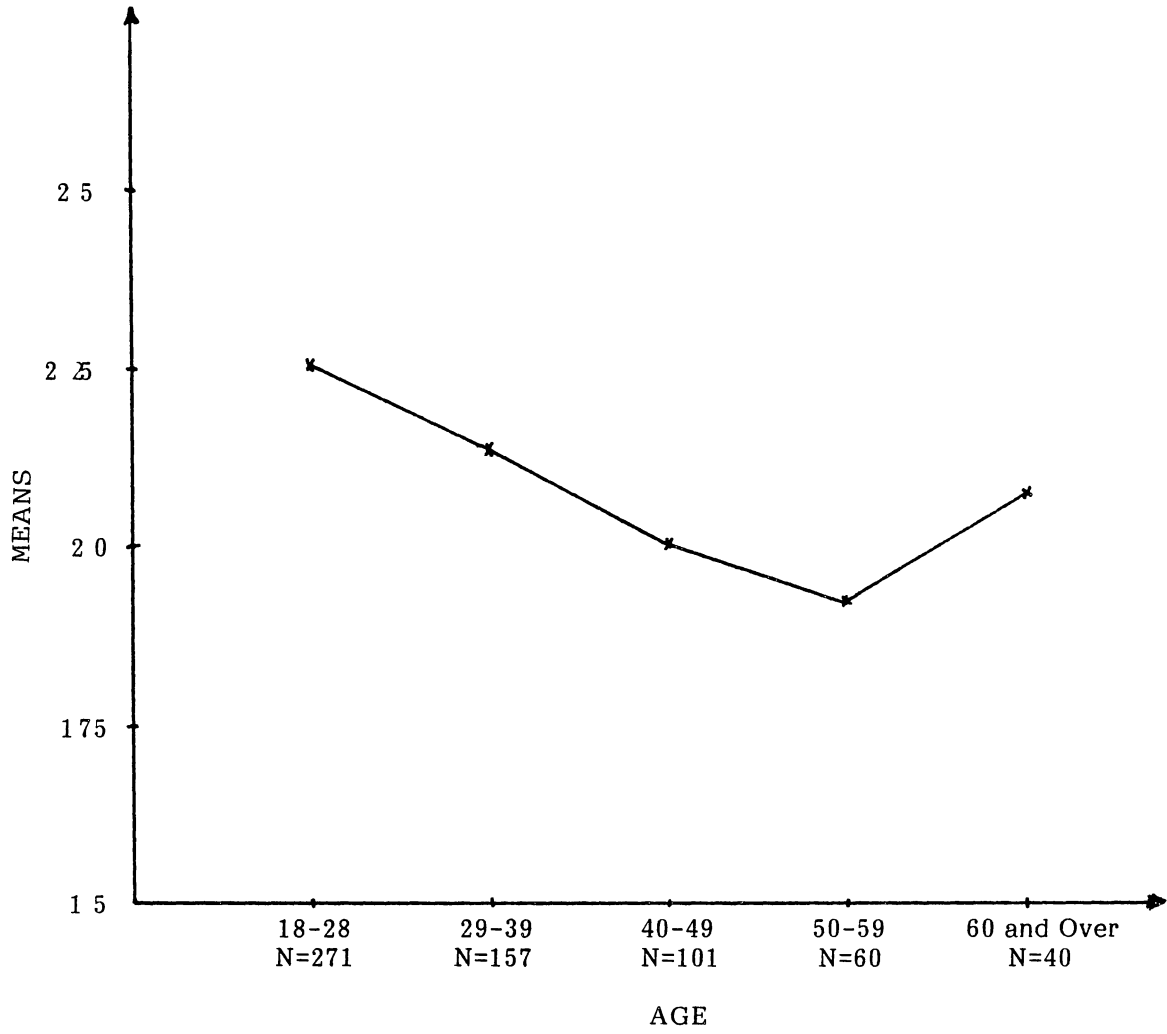


Figure 1 Means and Numbers for Personal Factors by Age

TABLE XI
SOURCE TABLE FOR INSTITUTIONAL
FACTORS BY AGE

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	4	3 59	0 90	1 34	0 25
Within groups	623	417 31	0 67		
Total	627	420 90			

P < 05

TABLE XII
SOURCE TABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT
FACTORS BY AGE

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	4	23 63	5 91	9 07	0 00
Within groups	622	405 09	0 65		
Total	626	428 72			

P < 05

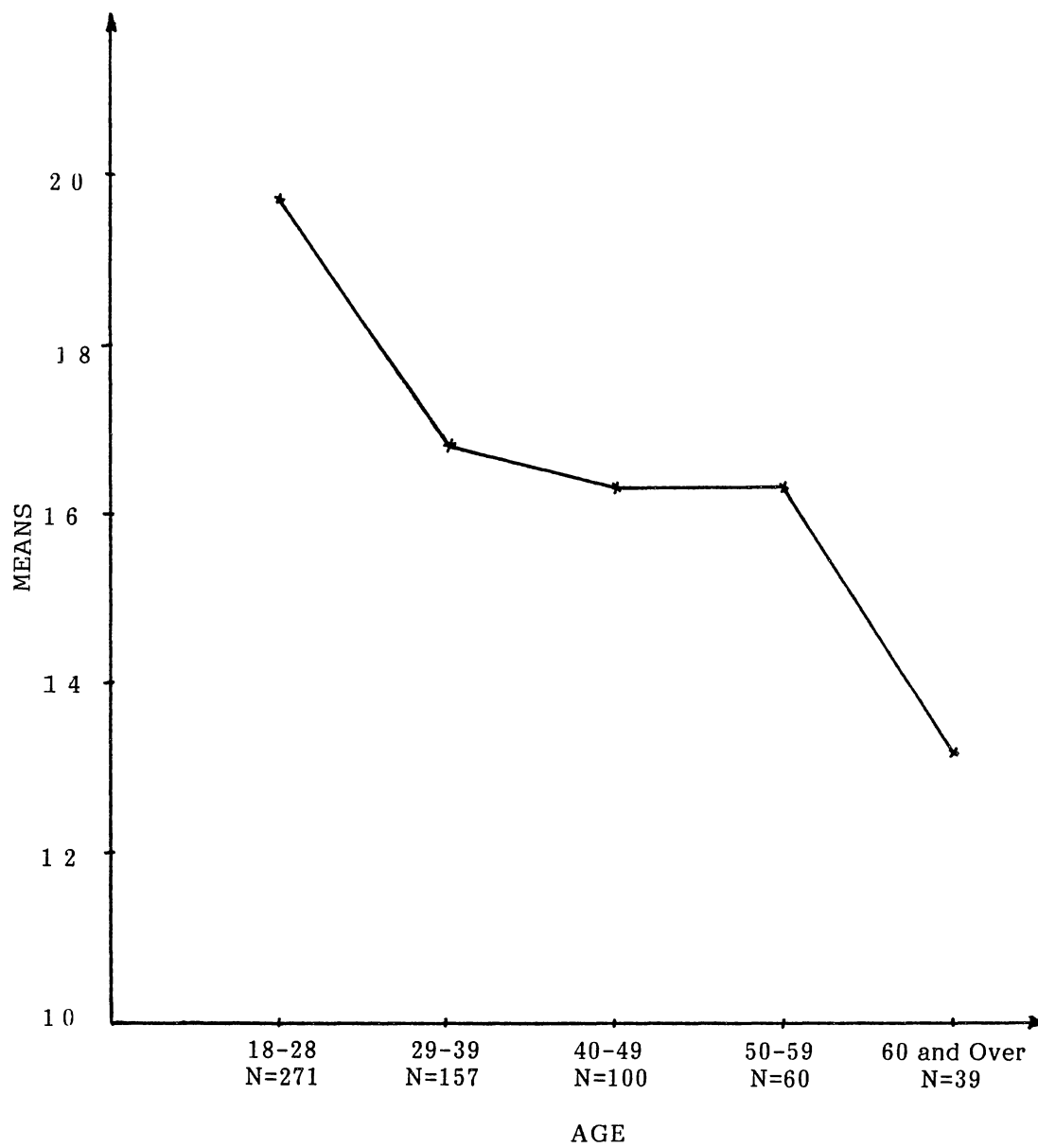


Figure 2 Means and Numbers for Employment Factors by Age

the younger the person the greater the impact of the employment factors, with a continuing decline for the older age person. The Scheffe test indicated a significant difference between the 18-28 age group and the other four age groups. Eta Squared test of strength was 0.06, indicating that six percent of the variability in employment factors was accounted for by age.

Research Question Number Two

Is there a relationship between race and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

From the results (Table XIII), it was found there was a significant relationship between race and the personal factors which influence adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools. The means (Figure 3) shows that the personal factors were more significant to Blacks than to any of the other three races.

TABLE XIII
SOURCE TABLE FOR PERSONAL
FACTORS BY RACE

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	3	4.46	1.49	2.72	0.00
Within groups	628	343.12	0.55		
Total	631	347.58			

P < .05

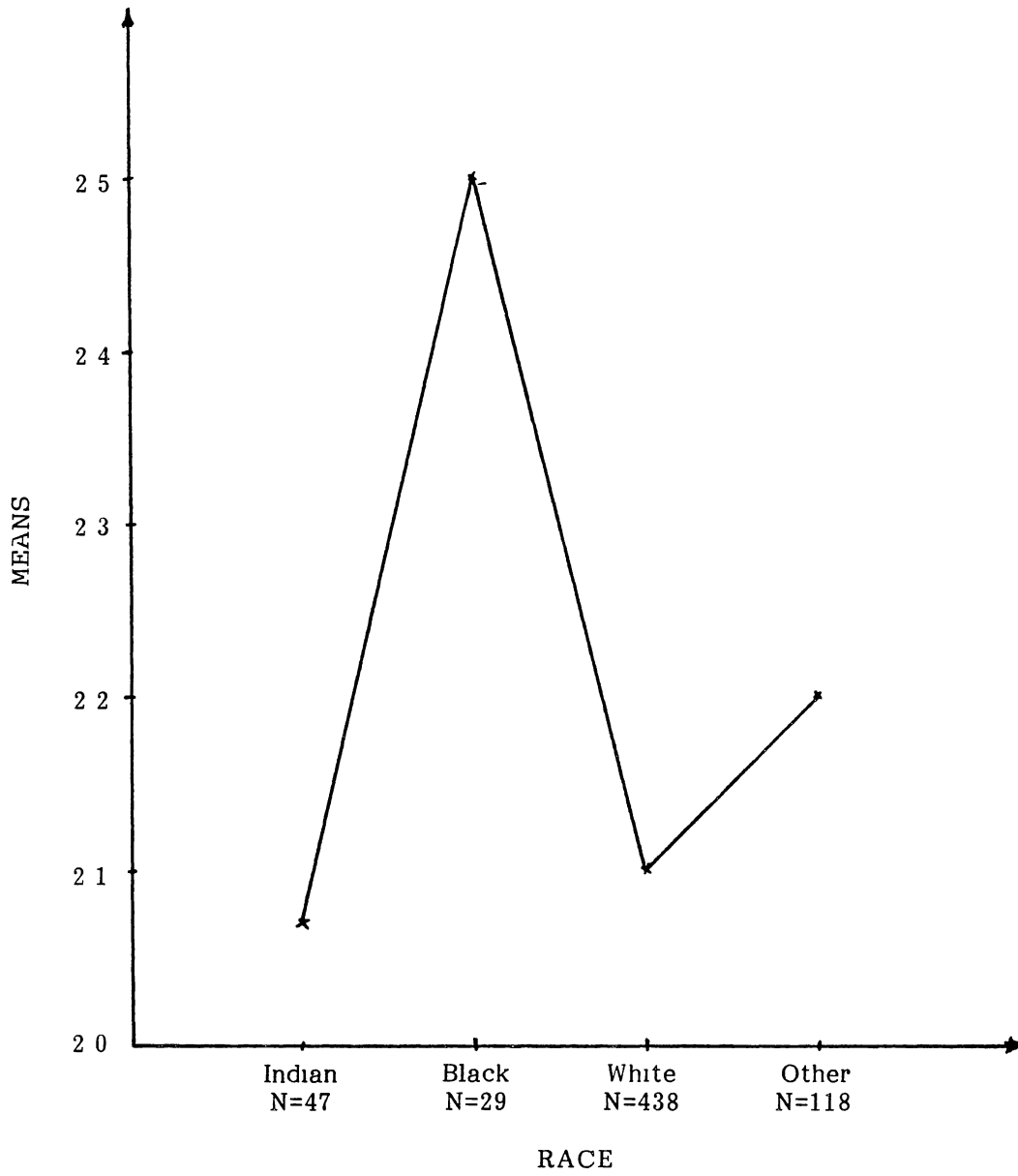


Figure 3 Means and Numbers for Personal Factors by Race

The Scheffe test indicated a significant difference in the amount of influence on personal factors between the black and white races. Eta Squared test of strength was 0.01, indicating that one percent of the variability in the personal factors was accounted for by race.

Analysis of institutional factors by race (Table XIV) revealed a significant relationship toward the adults' decisions for obtaining training in area vocational-technical schools. The means (Figure 4) shows that the institutional reasons for adults' decisions to obtain vocational-technical training were of more significance to Blacks than to any of the other three races.

TABLE XIV
SOURCE TABLE FOR INSTITUTIONAL
FACTORS BY RACE

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	3	11.01	3.67	5.57	0.00
Within groups	627	413.14	0.66		
Total	630	424.15			

P < .05

The Scheffe test indicated a significant difference between the Black and Indian groups, and between the Black and White groups. Eta

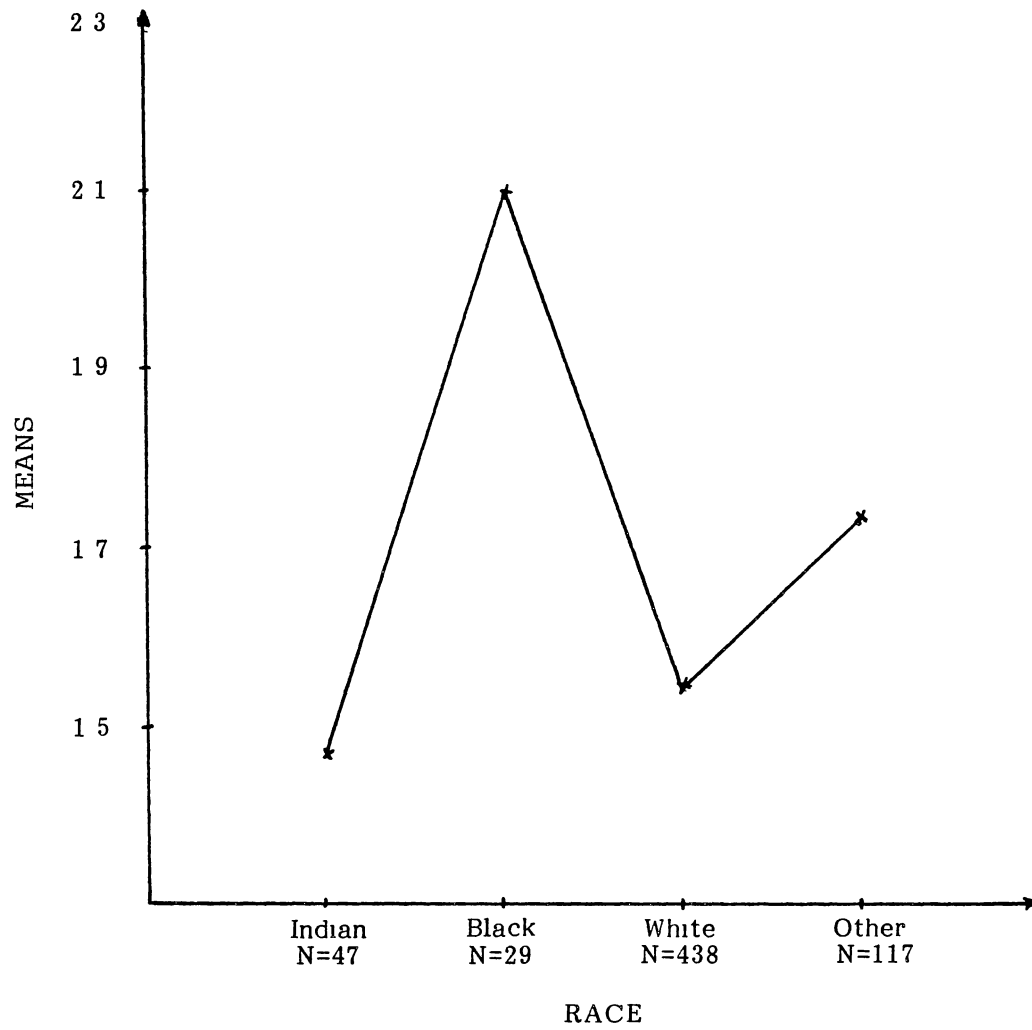


Figure 4 Means and Numbers for Institutional Factors by Race

Squared test of strength was 0 03, indicating that three percent of the variability was accounted for by race

It was also found that there was a significant relationship between race and the employment factors (Table XV) The means (Figure 5) shows that race had a similar effect on the employment factors as in the institutional and personal factors The Scheffe test indicated a significant difference between Blacks and the other three races Eta Squared test of strength was 0 02, indicating that two percent of the variability in employment factors was accounted for by race

TABLE XV
SOURCE TABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT
FACTORS BY RACE

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	3	8 00	2 66	3 91	0 01
Within groups	626	425 98	0 68		
Total	629	433 98			

P < 05

Research Question Number Three

Is there a relationship between sex and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

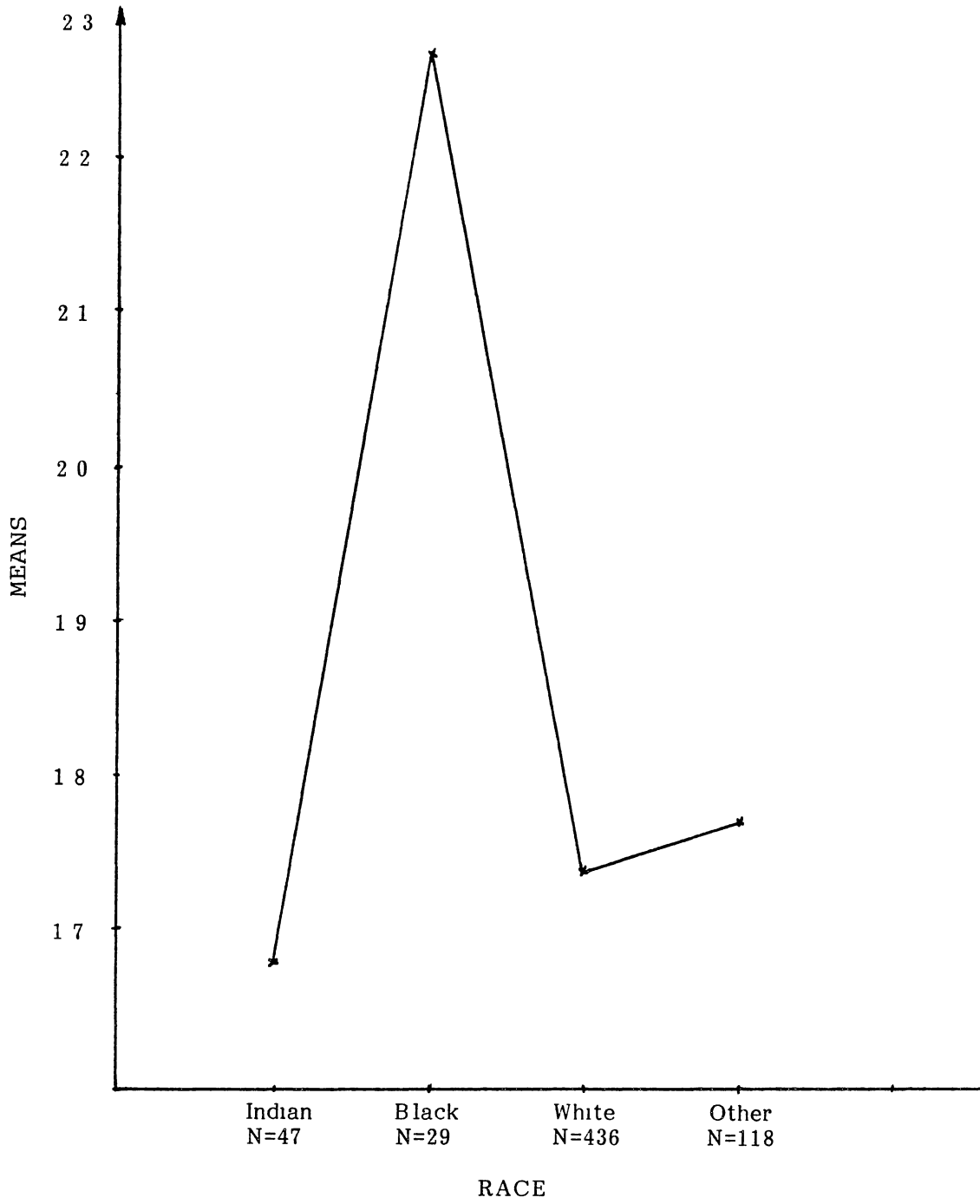


Figure 5 Means and Numbers for Employment Factors by Race

The findings revealed no relationship between the personal factors (Table XVI), institutional factors (Table XVII), and employment factors (Table XVIII), and sex

TABLE XVI
SOURCE TABLE FOR PERSONAL
FACTORS BY SEX

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	1	0 71	0 71	1 29	0 26
Within groups	630	346 87	0 55		
Total	631	347 58			

P < 05

TABLE XVII
SOURCE TABLE FOR INSTITUTIONAL
FACTORS BY SEX

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	1	0 51	0 51	0 76	0 38
Within groups	629	423 64	0 67		
Total	630	424 15			

P < 05

TABLE XVIII
SOURCE TABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT
FACTORS BY SEX

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	1	0 08	0 08	0 11	0 74
Within groups	628	433 90	0 69		
Total	629	433 98			

P < 05

Research Question Number Four

What effect does marital status have on the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

The results (Table XIX) indicated a relationship between marital and personal factors related to training in area vocational-technical schools. Findings by the means (Figure 6) indicated that single status had the greatest influence on the personal reasons for vocational-technical training, and that marital status had the least influence. For divorced and widowed adults, the personal reasons for obtaining training were more important than for the married adults. Results of the Scheffe test indicated a significant difference between the single and married groups. Eta Squared was 0 02, indicating that two percent of the variability in personal factors was due to marital status.

TABLE XIX
SOURCE TABLE FOR PERSONAL FACTORS
BY MARITAL STATUS

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	3	8 58	2 86	5 30	0 00
Within groups	628	339 00	0 54		
Total	631	347 58			

P < 05

A significant relationship between marital status and the institutional factors is shown in Table XX. The means (Figure 7) indicates that of the 632 students participating in the study, the widowed and single groups exerted more influence on the institutional factors than the married and divorced groups. The Scheffe test indicated a significant difference between the single and married groups. Eta Squared was 0.02, indicating that two percent of the variability was attributed to marital status.

Examination of the results (Table XXI) shows a relationship between marital status and the employment reasons adults have for seeking vocational-technical training. The means (Figure 8) reveals that for employment factors, as in personal factors (Figure 6), single status had the greatest amount of influence. The married or divorced status had the least effect. From the data, there appears to be some importance placed on employment factors by those in the widowed category. The Scheffe test showed a significant difference in the amount of influence between the

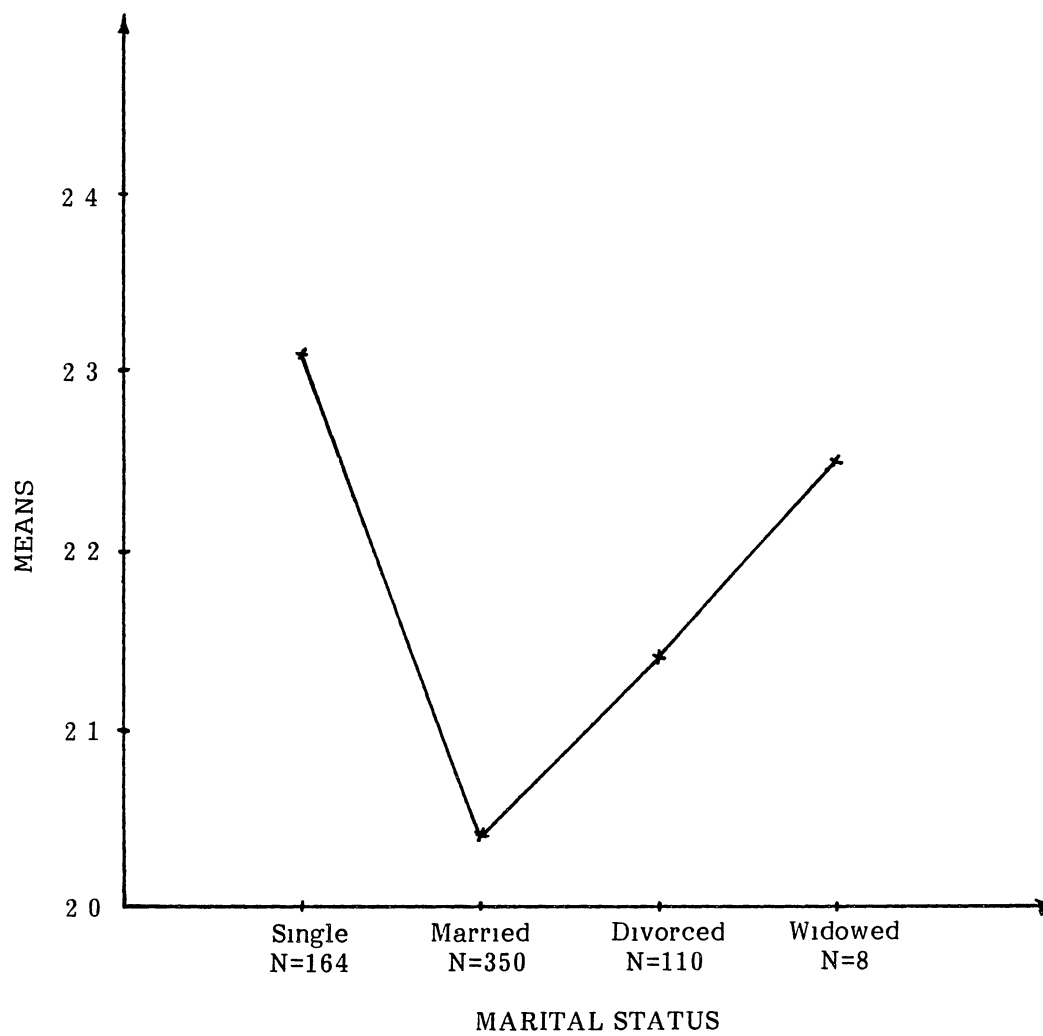


Figure 6 Means and Numbers for Personal Factors by Marital Status

TABLE XX
SOURCE TABLE FOR INSTITUTIONAL
FACTORS BY MARITAL STATUS

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	3	7 03	2 34	3 52	0 01
Within groups	627	417 12	0 67		
Total	630	424 15			

P < 05

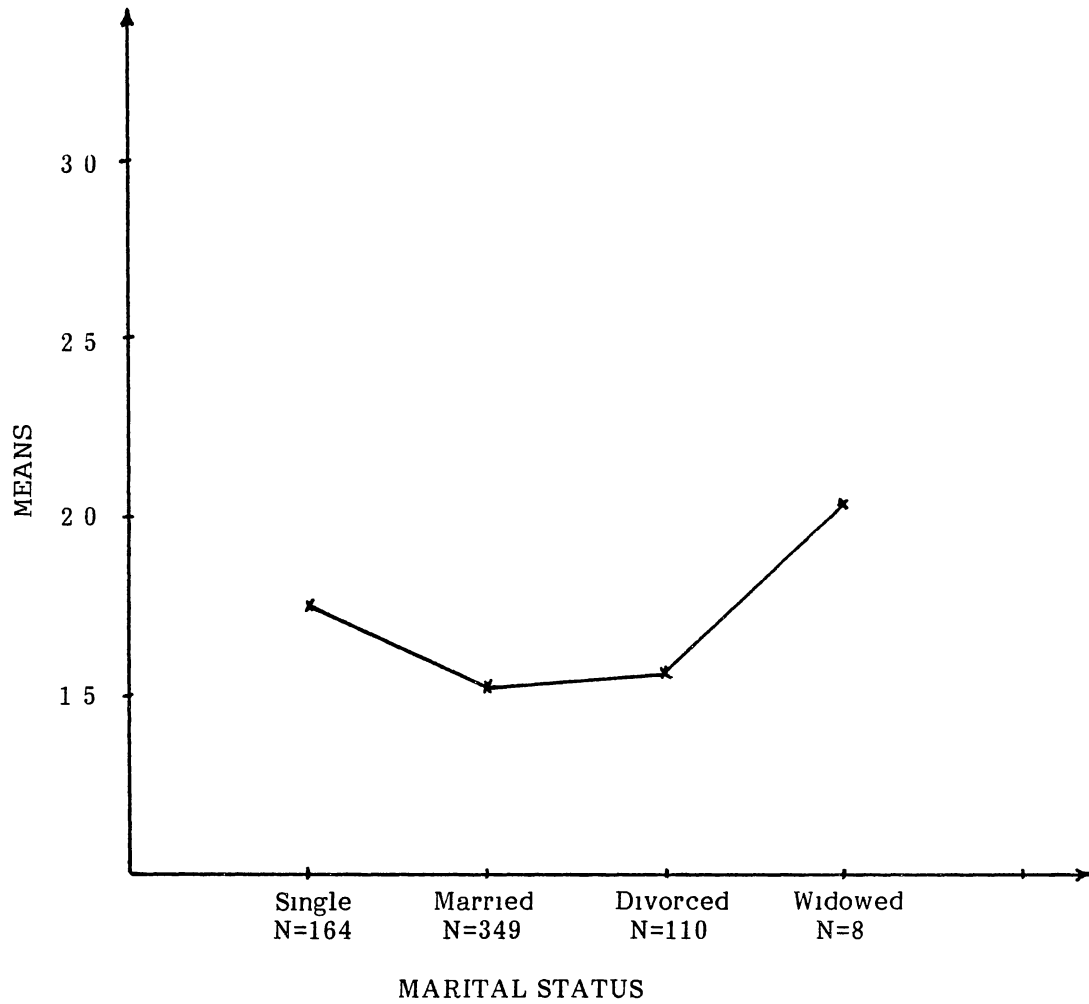


Figure 7 Means and Numbers for Institutional Factors by Marital Status

TABLE XXI
SOURCE TABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT
FACTORS BY MARITAL STATUS

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	3	18 40	6 13	9 24	0 00
Within groups	626	415 57	0 66		
Total	629	433 98			

P < 05

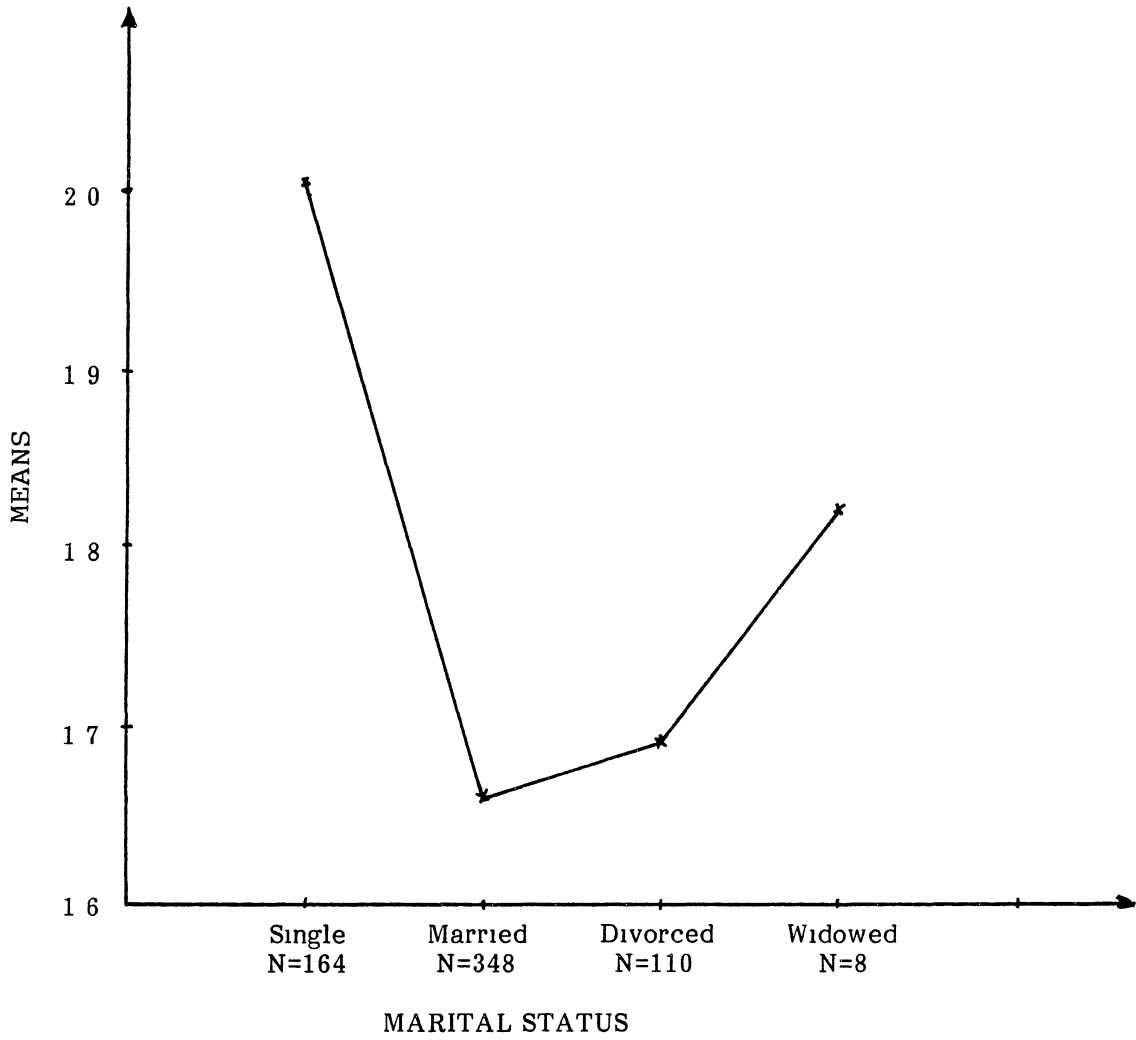


Figure 8 Means and Numbers for Employment Factors by Marital Status

single and married groups, and between the single and divorced group, but an insignificant difference between the widowed and other groups. The widowed group did not have a significant difference with any of the other groups. Eta Squared test of strength was 0.04, indicating that four percent of the variability in employment factors was accounted for by marital status.

Research Question Number Five

What effect does the number of years in school have on the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

The findings indicated no relationship between the number of years in school and the personal factors which influenced adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools (Table XXII).

TABLE XXII
SOURCE TABLE FOR PERSONAL
BY YEARS IN SCHOOL

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	8	6.59	0.82	1.50	0.15
Within groups	620	340.05	0.55		
Total	628	346.64			

P < .05

The number of years in school (Table XXIII) was not significant for the institutional reasons adults have for obtaining training in area vocational-technical schools

Employment factors by the number of years in school (Table XXIV) were found to be significant. The means (Figure 9) indicated that employment reasons for obtaining training were not as significant for those with 9 or 16 or more years of school. On the other hand, the other levels of education had an influence on employment reasons for seeking vocational-technical training. The Scheffe test indicated a significant difference between individuals having 12 or 16 or more years of school and the amount of influence on the employment factors. Eta Squared was 0.03, indicating that three percent of the variability in the employment factors was attributed to the number of years in school.

TABLE XXIII
SOURCE TABLE FOR INSTITUTIONAL
FACTORS BY YEARS IN SCHOOL

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	8	5.73	0.72	1.07	0.39
Within groups	619	416.49	0.67		
Total	627	422.22			

P < .05

TABLE XXIV
 SOURCE TABLE FOR EMPLOYMENT FACTORS
 BY NUMBER OF YEARS IN SCHOOL

Source	D F	Sum of squares	Mean squares	F ratio	F prob
Between groups	8	14 24	1 78	2 63	0 01
Within groups	618	418 68	0 68		
Total	626	432 92			

P < 05

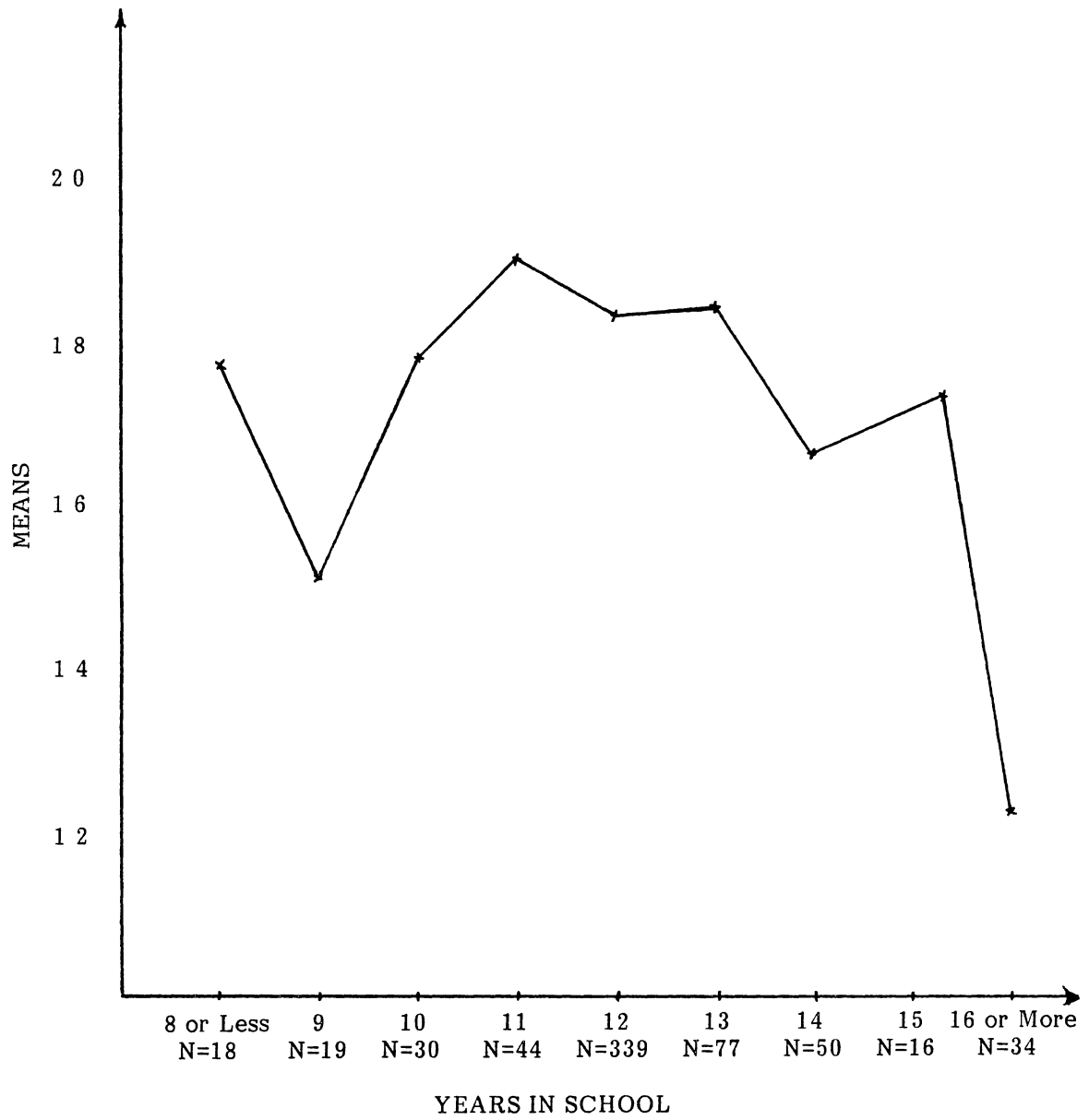


Figure 9 Means and Numbers for Employment by Years in School

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The information in this chapter is presented in three parts. The first part presents the summary of the study. The second part contains the conclusions. The third part contains the recommendations.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to identify personal, institutional, and employment factors which influence adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools. The results of the study will assist vocational educators in determining the significance of employment, institutional and employment factors which influence the adult's decision to obtain training in Area Vocational-Technical Schools.

To achieve the purpose of this study the following research questions were formulated:

1. Is there a relationship between age and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?
2. Is there a relationship between race and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

3 Is there a relationship between sex and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical school when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

4 Is there a relationship between marital status and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

5 Is there a relationship between the number of years in school and the reasons adults desire to obtain training in area vocational technical schools when personal, institutional, and employment factors are considered?

For the study, 657 participants were selected from five area vocational technical schools throughout Oklahoma. The five schools were randomly selected from among 41 area schools. Of the five selected schools, two were urban and three rural. Participants included adults enrolled as daytime or evening students and attending on a full- or part-time basis.

The instrument used for this study was a questionnaire consisting of two parts: (1) the personal, institutional, and employment factors, and (2) the demographics (Appendix A). A five-point scale (4 = much to 0 = none) was used in which participants indicated the amount of influence each item had on their decision to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools.

Analysis of variance was the statistical method used to analyze the data. Post-hoc Scheffe and Eta Squared were used when appropriate.

The analysis resulted in the following significant findings:

1. There was a significant relationship among the five age groups (18-28, 29-39, 40-49, 50-59, and 60 and over) and the personal

and employment factors Specifically, adults (age 18-28 years) obtained training in area vocational-technical schools for personal and employment reasons The three main personal reasons included personal improvement, personal desire, and opportunity for success The three main employment reasons include to learn new job, to have job security, and to advance in job

2 There was a significant relationship among the four race groups (Indian, Black, White, Other) and the personal, institutional, and employment factors Specifically, Blacks obtained training in area vocational-technical schools for personal, institutional, and employment reasons The three main personal reasons included personal improvement, personal desire, and opportunity for success The three main institutional reasons included class hours are convenient, faculty willing to work with adults, and location of the school The three main employment reasons included to learn new job, to have job security, and to advance in job

3 There were significant relationship among the four marital-status (single, married, divorced, widowed) groups and the personal, institutional, and employment reasons adults obtained training in area vocational-technical schools Specifically, the single adult obtained training for personal, institutional, and employment reasons The three main personal reasons included personal improvement, personal desire, and opportunity for success The three main institutional reasons included class hours are convenient, faculty willing to work with adults, and location of the school The three main employment reasons included to learn new job, to have job security, and to advance in job

4 There were significant relationship between the number of years adults were in school, 8 or less, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16 or more, and the employment reasons adults obtained training in area vocational-technical schools Specifically, adults who had attained 12 years of school obtained training for three main employment reasons, to learn new job, to have job security, and to advance in job

The analysis resulted in the following nonsignificant findings

1 There was no significant relationship among the five age groups and the institutional factors which influenced adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools

2 There was no significant relationship between the two sex groups and the personal, institutional, and employment factors which influenced adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools

3 There was no significant relationship between the number of years in school and the personal and institutional factors which influenced adults to obtain training in area vocational-technical schools

Conclusions

From the review of literature, findings of this study, and experience gained during gathering of the data, it can be concluded that adults have many reasons for seeking training in area vocational-technical schools Of all these, the three main reasons can be identified as personal improvement, personal desire, and to learn a new job

The typical adult student obtaining training in area vocational-technical schools can be described as white, female, 18-28 years of age, having completed at least 12 years of school, and being employed full-time

Programs sought by the adult students are many and varied. In the study, at least 48 different programs were identified. Of these, practical nursing and secretarial training had the highest enrollment. Interestingly, it was generally found that female students continued to enroll mainly in traditionally female-oriented programs while male students continued to enroll mostly in male oriented programs. For the females, the programs with the highest enrollment were practical nursing, secretarial training, data processing/IBM System 34 Microcomputers, and beginning typing. For the males, the programs with the highest enrollment were air conditioning/refrigeration and heating, electronics, basic electricity, and electronics programmable controllers.

Individual differences among the adult students affects the choices that will be made when seeking training in area vocational-technical schools. Differences in age, race, and marital status affect the adult's personal needs for training. It was found that the younger, the black, and the single adults were most affected. It was also found that individual differences affect the adults' choices when seeking training for employment reasons. Those affected were the younger adults, single, black, and having at least 11 years of school. Further, individual differences such as race, and marital status affected the institutional choices adults made when seeking vocational-technical training. Adults who were black or widowed were the most

characteristic which did not seem to affect the adults' choices for obtaining training was sex

Recommendations

The review of literature indicates that the traditional-age student population is declining and the adult-age student population is rapidly increasing. As a result, it has become necessary to implement changes in educational programs that best meet the adult student's more complex training needs. In addition, this investigation has shown that the majority of nontraditional students participate in vocational-technical training programs for personal or employment reasons. In view of these findings, the following recommendations are made:

- 1 That surveys of adults participating in vocational-technical training programs be considered an ongoing process by which to obtain current information on educational needs and desires. Such information would be helpful in updating, planning, and implementing programs that best meet the adult student's training needs.

- 2 That area vocational-technical schools regularly review and evaluate existing programs to ensure that the educational needs of participating adults are being met.

- 3 That traditional programs be scheduled to accommodate the nontraditional student.

- 3 That recruiting methods and materials be developed to encourage nontraditional student participation in educational programs.

- 4 That educational programs which are developed to meet adult needs simultaneously be designed to meet the needs of local and/or high-technology industries, with course-concentration directed towards

training adults in areas that will enhance their opportunities for first jobs or employment advancement

Recommendations for future research include the following

1 Each area vocational-technical school should conduct research to determine the educational needs of its local population. Such information would be helpful in developing personalized programs specifically targeted to meet the training needs of the adults most likely to participate in that particular school's training programs.

2 Local industries should be surveyed to determine the areas in which they most often require training for new jobs or additional training for job advancement of present employees. Such information would be helpful in implementing and/or updating educational programs for adults seeking training for employment reasons.

3 Research should be conducted to determine whether females continue to seek traditionally female-oriented and males continue to seek traditionally male-oriented training programs because these programs are specifically structured to accommodate either female or male students. If adult students continue to choose "female" or "male" careers due to course structuring, such information will be an invaluable tool in designing programs to accommodate both male and female students, and thus to recruit students of both sexes into previously shunned courses.

4 Research should be conducted to determine the reasons adults with less than 11 years of school have a low participation rate in educational training programs. Such information would be helpful in developing and implementing remedial or other courses that would enable the less-academically prepared adult to successfully cope with the expectations of vocational-technical level studies.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

**ADULT SURVEY
REASONS FOR TRAINING**

This survey is designed to identify reasons which influence adults to go back to school at area vocational schools. With the large number of adults returning to school it is most important to identify those reasons so that area schools can best serve the needs of adult students.

Directions Following are 42 statements or reasons that you may have considered in your decision to return to school. Please indicate what actually influenced you to enroll in the course you are now in by circling the best response to each statement.

Key To Responses

4 Much influence. One of the main reasons I am in the class.

3 Quite a bit of influence. Not a main reason but certainly considered important.

2 Some influence. This added to the reasons I am in the class.

1 A little influence. I did consider this when I decided to join the class.

0 No influence. This reason had no effect on my decision.

	<u>Much</u>				<u>None</u>
1 Challenge of new experiences	4	3	2	1	0
2 To have job security	4	3	2	1	0
3 Tuition is within my means	4	3	2	1	0
4 To learn new job	4	3	2	1	0
5 The best class for me is available	4	3	2	1	0
6 Evening class is available	4	3	2	1	0
7 Opportunity for success	4	3	2	1	0
8 Class hours are convenient	4	3	2	1	0
9 To have more job responsibilities	4	3	2	1	0
10 Having part time job	4	3	2	1	0
11 Challenge of school	4	3	2	1	0
12 Location of the school	4	3	2	1	0

	<u>Much</u>				<u>None</u>
13 To advance in job	4	3	2	1	0
14 Opportunity to meet new people	4	3	2	1	0
15 Size of the school	4	3	2	1	0
16 To increase income	4	3	2	1	0
17 Financial aid is available	4	3	2	1	0
18 The challenge of retraining	4	3	2	1	0
19 Challenge of tests	4	3	2	1	0
20 V A approved	4	3	2	1	0
21 Opportunity for acceptance by family, peers and others	4	3	2	1	0
22 Job placement services are available	4	3	2	1	0
23 Family encouragement	4	3	2	1	0
24 School accredited	4	3	2	1	0
25 Employer encouragement	4	3	2	1	0
26 Personal desire	4	3	2	1	0
27 Child care center at the school	4	3	2	1	0
28 Time off from work is available	4	3	2	1	0
29 Personal need	4	3	2	1	0
30 Publicity/ads	4	3	2	1	0
31 Improvement of level of education	4	3	2	1	0
32 Faculty willing to work with adults	4	3	2	1	0
33 Reimbursed for attending school	4	3	2	1	0
34 To get away from home	4	3	2	1	0
35 To train for first job	4	3	2	1	0
36 Challenge of working with younger students	4	3	2	1	0
37 Classroom work only	4	3	2	1	0
38 On the job training offered	4	3	2	1	0
39 Challenge of competing with younger students	4	3	2	1	0

	<u>Much</u>			<u>None</u>	
40 School reputation	4	3	2	1	0
41 Part-time enrollment is available	4	3	2	1	0
42 Personal improvement	4	3	2	1	0

Other Influencing Factors

_____	4	3	2	1	0

_____	4	3	2	1	0

_____	4	3	2	1	0

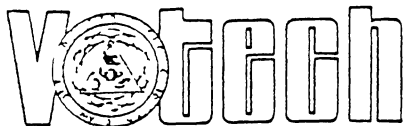
GENERAL INFORMATION

Please complete the following information

- Age ___ 18-28 ___ 29-39 ___ 40-49 ___ 50-59 ___ over 60
- Race ___ Indian ___ Black ___ White ___ Other(specify)
- Sex ___ Male ___ Female
- Marital status ___ Single ___ Married ___ Divorced
___ Widowed
- How many years of school did you complete before entering this program? ___ 8 or less ___ 9 ___ 10 ___ 11 ___ 12 ___ 13
___ 14 ___ 15 ___ 16 or more
- What program are you now enrolled in?

- What were you doing before you enrolled in this program?
Check as many as apply ___ School ___ Military
___ Unemployed ___ Employed full-time ___ Other(specify)

APPENDIX B
LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

FRANCIS TUTTLE DIRECTOR • 1515 WEST SIXTH AVE • STILLWATER OKLAHOMA 74074 • A C (405) 377 2000

October 29, 1985

Dear

Adults have many reasons for returning to school, including to further their education, to train for initial employment, to upgrade job skills, and to prepare for new jobs. The significant growth and changes in the school population requires that the Oklahoma Area Vocational-Technical School System provide services to best meet the needs of the adult students. As a result of this need and my interest in adult education, I am undertaking a study to identify reasons which have influenced adults to obtain training or retraining in Area Vocational-Technical Schools. The information obtained, I feel, will be of benefit to all area schools in recruiting, planning, and providing services to adult students. To accomplish this study, we need your help.

For the survey, we need five area schools from which to select the student participants, and your school is one of the five selected. At this time we would like to ask if you would agree for your school to participate in the survey. We would be surveying all adult daytime and nighttime, full-time or part-time adult students.

Enclosed is a copy of the questionnaire to be used. Please examine it and I will contact you by telephone on the week of November 4, 1985. At this time we will answer any questions you may have. If you agree to participate, we will set the date for the mailing of the student questionnaires to you.

Please let me assure you that the questionnaires are not coded in any way and your school will not be identified in any way.

Your participation in this survey is greatly appreciated. Thank you in advance.

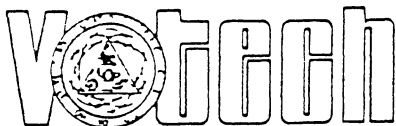
Sincerely,

Refugia M. Moore
Graduate Assistant Research Unit
405-377-2000, extension 319 or
405-372-9181

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

APPENDIX C

LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF VOCATIONAL AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

FRANCIS TUTTLE DIRECTOR • 1515 WEST SIXTH AVE • STILLWATER OKLAHOMA 74074 • A C (405) 377 2000

November 6, 1985

Dear Participant

We are doing a study to help find ways to improve training for adult students in Oklahoma. For the study, we need to find the reasons why adults go back to school. To do this, we need your help.

If you decide to help us, please take a few minutes to fill out one of the survey forms. The survey forms are not coded in any way. Neither you nor your school will be identified in any way. Your responses will be kept confidential.

Thank you for helping us in this survey.

Refugia M Moore
Graduate Assistant Research Unit

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

2
VITA

Refugia M Moore

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis THE PERSONAL, INSTITUTIONAL, AND EMPLOYMENT FACTORS WHICH
INFLUENCE ADULTS TO OBTAIN TRAINING IN AREA VOCATIONAL-
TECHNICAL SCHOOLS

Major Field Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical

Personal Data Born in Chamita, New Mexico, March 3, 1940, the
daughter of Manuel A DeAtoda and Maria Natividad Atencio
Married to Raymond G Moore, 1967

Education Graduated from Santa Cruz High School, Santa Cruz,
New Mexico in 1959, received Associate Degree in Nursing,
University of Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1970, received
Bachelor of Science in Education Degree from Central State
University, Edmond, Oklahoma in 1979, received Master of
Education Degree from Central State University, Edmond,
Oklahoma in 1983, completed requirements for the Doctor of
Education Degree from Oklahoma State University in December,
1986

Professional Experience Registered Nursing, Leflore Memorial
Hospital, Poteau, Oklahoma, 1970-1973, Practical Nursing
Instructor, Kiamichi Area Vocational-Technical School,
Poteau, Oklahoma, 1973-1978, Health Service Careers,
Kiamichi Area Vocational-Technical School, Poteau, Oklahoma,
1978-1985, Graduate Research Associate, Oklahoma State Uni-
versity, 1985-1986, Practical Nursing Instructor, Southwest
Oklahoma Skills Center, Altus, Oklahoma, 1986-present,

Professional Memberships Oklahoma Vocational Association,
American Vocational Association, Health Occupations
Education, KAPPA DELTA PI, Business and Professional Women's
Organization, Oklahoma Employment and Training Association,
National Employment and Training Association