

PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION AMONG ADULT
STUDENTS IN A NONTRADITIONAL
DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

By

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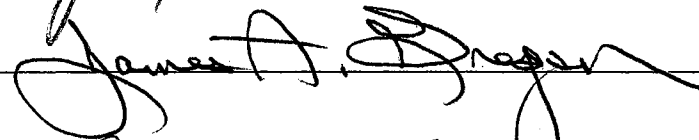
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Over the last decades the perspective of adult learning has changed drastically. The phenomenon of learning in adulthood is a complex and multifarious activity. Consequently, the field of adult education has seen rapid growth as it becomes characterized by a bewildering array of programs, agencies, and personnel working to assist adults in their learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). As the field of adult education has flourished, theorists have developed constructs and tentative formulations for developing an adult theory of learning and authors have outlined characteristics and motivations regarding the adult learner. Cranton (1994a) explicated that adult learning has been viewed as a process of being freed from the oppression of being illiterate, a means of gaining knowledge and skills, or a process of critical self-reflection that can lead to transformation. Mezirow (1991) wrote, "the goal of adult education is to help adult learners become more critically reflective, participate more fully and freely in rational discourse and action, and advance developmentally by moving toward meaning perspectives that are more inclusive, discriminating, permeable, and integrative of experience" (pp. 224-225). This process of transformative learning occurs when, through critical self-reflection, individuals become aware of how and why their assumptions have come to constrain the way they perceive, understand, and feel about their world. Once they have critically reflected upon their systems, they can begin to change their meaning

structures and make choices based on their new understanding. Mezirow more specifically labeled this reorganization of meaning "perspective transformation".

Education in an open society has always had the charge of promoting personal growth as one of its major aims. It can be argued, however, that transformative learning cannot be the single or even the most common objective of adult education. Many times little of what adults want or need to learn involves revisions to basic assumptions or transformation of perspective. However, Cranton (1994a) contended that if we view education as the means by which individuals and societies are shaped and changed, fostering transformative learning is the central goal of adult education. This central focus enables education to help facilitate change for adults in a dynamic society. For the learner, this means the freeing of one's self from forces that limit our options and control our choices. Consequently, the integration of transformed perspectives enables a person to be self-confident, productive, and in control of decisions directly affecting the individual. Through critical self-reflection of assumptions and ways of interpreting experiences, the adult learner is able to begin the process of examining, questioning, and revising perceptions which lead to transformative learning (Boyd & Myers, 1988). This search enables the adult to establish a purpose for individual existence and affirm changes required to enhance self-actualization and personal fulfillment.

As a result of an aging population and the dynamics of adult learning, educational institutions are being challenged with the endeavor of promoting adult education. Consequently, the pressing issue is to provide the necessary context to

foster and facilitate one of the central factors of adult development, the process of personal transformation. Brookfield (1990) encouraged education to provide a context for helping adults learn how to transform their rich and diverse life experiences from potential barriers to a basis for growth and lifelong learning. When confronting new learning situations, either in their personal lives or at work, adults often can have difficulty adapting to change or may lack the ability to see new alternatives because of past experiences or inhibiting values, prejudices, and assumptions. Through perspective transformation, a person can engage in alternative thinking and integrate change into the fabric of their daily living.

Statement of the Problem

For adults to be successful in their professional and personal relationships, it is imperative that they experience individual change and growth in order to be satisfied and fulfilled in their lives. However, the process of change cannot flourish when barriers to new ideas and alternative judgments are stifled by blocked thinking. Fortunately, the process of perspective transformation is a means for examining and revising set thinking in order to remove cognitive obstacles that can suppress personal growth and development. Even though in recent years new theoretical development has been introduced into the field of adult education regarding transformative learning, there is little literature available for the adult practitioner interested in the application of these developments. Limited empirical research has been conducted to support the theoretical concepts of perspective transformation.

Consequently, the problem remains that adult educators in a formal educational setting cannot promote and support the concept of perspective transformation when identified strategies and factors supporting and stimulating this process have not been examined or researched.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of perspective transformation that was experienced among adult students in a nontraditional undergraduate degree program. The theoretical framework for the study focused on perspective transformation. Through a quantitative pre-test, post-test design it was the aim of the study to determine the nature of personal change that was experienced as a result of the degree program. Additionally, a qualitative approach was used to identify critical incidents within the program that could promote perspective transformation.

Research Questions

The following research questions were examined:

1. To what extent is perspective transformation experienced among adult students in a nontraditional, undergraduate degree completion program?
2. What critical incidents were identified during the educational experience which supported perspective transformation?

Scope and Limitations

This study focused on the degree of perspective transformation experienced by adult learners within a formal learning environment. It also addressed the influence of certain critical incidents within that educational context that were potential triggering events for a perspective change. Even though the literature supports the fact that adults can experience a variety of triggering events in the many roles they perform, these factors were not the focus of this particular study. The catalyst for change and personal growth focused on the educational experience within which the student was participating. Consequently, the main goal of the study was to identify elements within the educational process that become necessary in promoting perspective transformation.

The study dealt with adult students enrolled within a specific learning environment. Even though two large metropolitan cities were represented, the study was conducted in one state and subjects were selected from a single university. Caution regarding application of the study findings may be noted related to the sample and generalization. Due to the use of this convenience sample, it is not known if the findings can be generalized to other adult education programs. Even though these limitations of the study exist, findings provide information on factors which contribute to perspective transformation among adult students and can be employed by adult educators.

Definitions of Terms

Adult student: For purposes of this study, a person at least 25 years of age who engages in adult oriented roles and formal education.

Critical reflection: Assessment of the validity of the presuppositions of one's meaning perspectives, and examination of their sources and consequences (Mezirow, 1991).

Critical incident: The description of a specific event that is related to a certain topic or theme which is viewed as positive or negative (Canton, 1994a).

Meaning perspective: The structure of assumptions that constitutes a frame of reference for interpreting the meaning of an experience (Mezirow, 1991).

Nontraditional degree program: For purposes of this study, an accelerated, lock-step, degree completion program designed for the working adult who has already earned 62 or more college hours of credit.

Perspective transformation: Process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of our psychocultural assumptions has come to constrain the way in which we perceive our world, of reconstituting that structure in a way that allows us to be more inclusive and discriminating in our integration of experience, and to act on these new understandings (Mezirow, 1991).

Reflectivity: Examination of the justification for one's beliefs, primarily to guide action and to reassess the efficacy of the strategies and procedures used in problem solving (Mezirow, 1991).

Self-actualization: Fulfilling oneself by the full use and exploitation of talent, capabilities, and potentialities (Maslow, 1970).

Transformative learning: The development of revised assumptions, premises, ways of interpreting experience, or perspectives on the way a person views the world by means of critical self-reflection (Cranton, 1994a).

Organization of the Study

Chapter I of this study includes an introduction to the problem, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, the scope and limitations of this study, and definitions of terms.

Chapter II is a review of the related literature that is pertinent to the research problem. This chapter is divided into the following headings; adult learning, transformational learning, perspective transformation, and implications for adult education.

Chapter III outlines the methodology that was used in the study. This includes the research design, a description of the study population, sampling techniques, the procedures for data collection, instrumentation, protection of human subjects, and how analysis of the data was carried out.

Chapter IV presents the findings of the study relevant to the research questions.

Chapter V summarizes the study, presents conclusions, and makes suggestions for practice and additional research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature was reviewed in the areas of adult learning in general, transformational learning, and educational practices related specifically to adult educators. Overall, the review included information concerning adult development, the process of perspective transformation which leads to transformative learning, and the adult educators role in facilitating perspective transformation.

Adult Learning

With the face of America aging over the last decade, there has been a surge of interest in adult learning theory. The phenomenon of adult learning is complex and difficult to capture in a single definition. However, theorists and practitioners in the field of adult education have attempted to synthesize an outline of current thinking and research on the topic (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Cross, 1981; Merriam & Cunningham, 1989; Peters & Jarvis, 1991). Even though adult learning is an intensely personal process, the adult education field has realized the need for programs, various agencies, and prepared personnel working to assist adults in their learning. Educators are becoming increasingly aware of differences in the adult student and institutions are struggling to meet the unique needs that are associated with adult living. Just as there is no single theory of learning in general, adult learning is not construed of a single school of thought. Drawing upon the work of Habermas and Mezirow, Cranton (1994a) classified adult learning in three

categories: acquisition of knowledge and skills, or what is referred to as subject-oriented adult learning; fulfillment of expressed learner needs and goals, noted as consumer-oriented adult learning; and, a process of critical self-reflection during a time when individuals question and explore meaning, what is also termed emancipatory learning. Typically, the discussions related to the theory of these positions can be divided into three schools of thought: those anchored in the belief that there are unique characteristics of adult learners; one's based on the understanding of an adult's life situations or stages of life; and, those that focus on an inner change perspective (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991).

These categorical theories of adult learning are supported by Cross (1981) as she outlined a need for theory development in the field of adult education. One approach she explicated was to determine what distinctive characteristics adults possess and then build a theory contrasting adult learners with children as learners.

The adult education literature generally supports the idea that teaching adults should be approached in a different way than teaching adolescents. This assumption that teachers of adults should use a different style of teaching was made prominent by Malcolm Knowles (1970) in his andragogical model of adult learning. Knowles defines andragogy as "the art and science of helping adults learn" and contrasts it with "pedagogy," which is concerned with helping children learn (p. 38). Knowles distinguishing characteristic differences in how adults and children learn was based on several basic assumptions: in adulthood self-concept moves from one of being a dependent personality toward one of being a self-directing human being; adults

accumulate a growing reservoir of experience that becomes an increasing resource for learning; adults readiness to learn becomes oriented increasingly to the developmental tasks of social roles; adults time perspective changes from one of postponed application of knowledge to immediacy of application; and, motivation to learning includes some external inducements, but deepens to include a greater range of internal motivators. Apps (1981) also supported this premise in outlining major areas of differences between returning students and traditional students. He identified life experiences, motivation, academic behavior, and others as differing factors adult learners exhibit. Chickering (1981) collected extensive writings addressing the need for educational institutions to respond more effectively to a diverse range of students. He promoted that students experience differing life cycle challenges and growth in terms of intellectual competence, ego development, moral and ethical development, interpersonal competence, capacity for intimacy and professional development. Consequently, adult educators and administrators need a knowledge base and understanding of these differences to adequately design and implement programs meeting the needs of adult learners.

Agreement was found throughout the field of adult education that adults have specific characteristics and needs; however, there is debate regarding the validity of two distinct teaching approaches. Some believe that adult education is essentially the same process as general education and does not require a specified teaching method (Garrison, 1994). Brookfield (1985) raises the question of whether andragogy is really a proven theory or merely provides a set of well-grounded

principles of good practice for adult learners. Other arguments reflect the question of whether andragogy is a learning theory or teaching theory. Whatever the argument, it cannot be denied that Knowles' andragogy theory has provided insight and understanding into the needs and characteristics of the adult learner.

Another theoretical position for developing adult learning theory that Cross (1981) examined was the developmental approach where various stages, phases, or life events are identified and then utilized to predict inevitable predetermined patterns of learning. Two different streams of study can be identified in this research. One is the study of phases of the life-cycle and another is examining developmental stages of growth and maturity.

The life-cycle research is interested in the responses people make to age and changing social expectations as they advance through the phases of adulthood. Illustrative names associated with life-phase or life-cycle research are Levinson, Sheehy, Neugarten, Lowenthal and Weathersby (Cross, 1981). Developmental stage theory regards growth as tending to move in ordered sequence toward increasingly complex capacities or from immaturity to maturity. The sequential development theorist (Levinson, Gould, Erikson, Kohlberg) have attempted to delineate the common themes of adult life according to what age or stage of life one is in (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991).

A third perspective to constructing an adult learning theory can be based on the inner changes of the adult learner as he/she deal with the mental construction of experience and inner meaning. This school of thought does not follow a linear

progression in thinking but focuses on an interrelated approach of developmental processes, biological, social, and psychological influences (Wood, 1993). One of the most developed "theory" in this group is Mezirow's notion of perspective transformation. The ability for adults to learn through reflection of self and ones relationships to the world is claimed by Mezirow (1981) to be solely an adult learning capacity. The Reflective Judgment Model developed by Kitchener and King (1990) identified a problem-solving meaning perspective that their data suggested does not develop until the adult years. Boyd and Myers (1988) described two stages of life where the second half (adult years) moves to a goal of integration to achieve wholeness. Explorations in this stage lead to questions such as "Where am I going from here?", "What really counts in this life?", and "Where does my life fit into the scheme of things?"

Within this theory of adult learning, researchers have identified the construct of problem-solving and exploration as critical reflection which can lead to changes in perspective and consciousness (Brookfield, 1987; Mezirow, 1990; Hart, 1990). Brookfield (1986) stated that learning to critically reflect is one of the most significant activities of adult life. This process enables adults to engage in creating their own personal and social worlds, instead of letting others do this on their behalf. He encouraged education to provide a context for helping adults learn how to transform their rich and diverse life experience from a potential barrier to change into a basis for growth and lifelong learning. This theoretical approach to adult learning emphasizes the importance of inner meaning and mental constructs in

defining the nature of learning in adult life (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). This emancipatory adult learning has become known as transformative learning.

Transformative Learning

By the time a person reaches adulthood, there is usually an acquired way of viewing and interpreting experiences and values. Mezirow (1985) believed that the purpose of learning was to enable people to better understand the way they view the meaning of their experiences and to realize and understand how they interpret meaning from the set of values they operate. "The goal for education is to help learners move from a simple awareness of their experiencing to an awareness of the conditions of their experiencing (how they are perceiving, thinking, judging, feeling, acting) and beyond this to an awareness of the reasons why they experience as they do and move to action based upon these insights" (p. 197). Research and insightfulness support the fact that we do not simply level off after the age of eighteen, but continue to change and grow. A good education can help people understand these changes and possibly play a part in bringing them about (Daloz, 1986).

Mezirow's theory of transformative learning (how adults learn, transform, and develop) is rooted in humanism and critical social theory (Cranton, 1994a). From a general learning theory, humanism emphasizes a person's perceptions that are centered in experience, as well as the freedom and responsibility to become what one is capable of becoming. This learning theory stresses the self-directedness of

adults and the value of experience in the learning process (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). We interpret our experiences and the things we encounter in our own way, so what we make of the world is a result of our perceptions of our experiences. Transformative learning, then, is a process of examining, questioning, validating, and revising these perceptions.

In a study conducted on adults making career changes and experiencing transitions, Lankard (1993) found that many adults who had always viewed life as a linear, steadily upward-progressing process had more difficulty making transitional changes. However, those adults who looked at life through a cyclical view were able to master self-renewal and change more effectively. The cyclical view demands that adults let go of old, outmoded habits and learn new ways to process and prevail through life's transitions. It is only through the transformation process that life views can be changed.

Paradigm Shifts

To better understand the nature of transformative learning, the concept of paradigms and paradigm shifts is useful. Kuhn (1970) made the term popular in his attempts to understand the evolution and revolution of scientific knowledge and method. He observed that while much of science is a slow, gradual elaboration of a paradigm, key breakthroughs do not follow this pattern. At rare points, individuals make intuitive leaps and piece together the basics of a new, overarching frame or paradigm. Kuhn showed how almost every significant breakthrough in the field of

scientific endeavor is first a break with tradition, with old ways of thinking, or with old paradigms. While Kuhn limited his arguments to scientific knowledge, the concept of paradigms can be usefully applied to the individual. O'Connor and Wolfe (1991) illustrated that in terms relevant to adults, the individual's paradigm is the system of assumptions, perceptions, expectations, feelings, beliefs, and values organized to understand an extensive range of situations and events. At a cognitive level, the paradigm defines what is real by framing sequence of events and screening out irrelevancies. At an affective level, it identifies and priorities problems by facilitating imagination and creating potential courses of action. "Paradigms are intangible and internal, but permeate everything concrete and external. They emerge out of the recurrent experiences of life and the parallel needs for psychological coherence and a manageable self-concept" (p. 326).

Senge (1990), in his challenge for developing learning organizations, described paradigms as mental models representing the internal images that determine not only how we make sense of the world, but how we take action. He examined this theory from a system's approach and illustrated that new insights in the workplace fail to get put into practice because they conflict with deeply held internal images of how the world works.

Mental models can be simple generalizations such as "people are untrustworthy," or they can be complex theories, such as my assumptions about why members of my family interact as they do. But what is most important to grasp is that mental models are active -- they shape how we act

(p. 175).

These mental models are very powerful because they affect the way in which we see and interpret the world. To change interpretation, a person must change the embedded beliefs which dictate meaning.

Covey (1989) used the analogy of a "map" to help understand the importance of paradigms. A map is not the territory, but is simply an explanation of certain aspects of the territory. Consequently, a paradigm is a theory, an explanation, or a model of something else. We interpret everything we experience through mental maps and assume that the way we see things is the way they really are or the way they should be. When a person begins to alter this set thinking and looks at the picture differently, a paradigm shift is taking place. It becomes obvious that if change is to take place in a person's life, basic paradigms must be examined and challenged.

Perspective Transformation

Perspective Transformation Defined

The contributions of Mezirow (1981, 1985, 1989, 1990, 1991) regarding perspective transformation have been some of the most extensive in the field and have also examined transformations in an educational context. He defined perspective transformation accordingly:

Perspective transformation refers to the process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of our psychocultural assumptions has come to

constrain the way in which we perceive our world, of reconstituting that structure in a way that allows us to be more inclusive and discriminating in our integration of experience and to act on these new understandings.

Perspective transformation is the process by which adults come to recognize introjected dependency roles and relationships and the reasons for them and to take action to overcome them (Mezirow, 1985, p. 22).

As Nowak (1981) pointed out, perspective transformation is a consciously achieved state in which the individual's perspective on life is transformed. It is the conscious change from old to new behavioral patterns. This new perspective serves as a vantage point for life's actions and interactions, affecting the way life is lived. Nowak further discussed that perspective transformation is not a therapy or theory, but rather a personal process for escalating one's development that happens within the individual in response to a particular set of stimuli and reflections right for the individual. Perspective transformation represents not only a total change in life perspective, but an actualization of that perspective. In other words, life is not only seen from a new perspective, it is lived from that perspective. The process can neither be taught nor administered, but can be accelerated and facilitated by the help of an assistant, or by self-help.

Boyd (1989), in his work with transformations in small groups, defined the process of perspective transformation as "a personal fundamental change in one's personality involving conjointly the resolution of a personal dilemma and the expansion of consciousness resulting in greater personality integration" (p. 459).

Boyd's work with Myers (Boyd & Myers, 1988) further explained this definition as based on Jung's identification of particular sets of psychological processes that are involved in the enlargement of the personality. "Although all transformations do not lead to the expansion and integration of an individual's personality, it is only through transformations that significant changes occur in the individual's psychosocial development" (p.262). Consequently, transformations reveal critical insights, and develop fundamental understandings by which a people can possess an active realization of their true being. This process and realization may be individual, as in psychotherapy; it can be in group, as promoted by Freire (1984), or collectively, as demonstrated in the civil rights and women's movements. Freire strongly believed that transformation without movement to social action was only an intellectual activity and did not warrant only an end of personal development and growth.

Meaning Perspectives

If perspective transformation involves reflectively transforming the beliefs, attitudes, opinions, and emotional reactions that constitute our meaning schemes, then an attempt must be made by adult educators to establish a theoretical base for perspective transformation as a central process of adult development. Mezirow (1991) made an excellent attempt at this case, by examining how meaning perspectives are established and how reflectivity plays a vital role in validating this meaning.

Meaning perspectives, according to Mezirow (1990), are the structures of assumptions within which an individual interprets experience. "Meaning perspectives are, for the most part, uncritically acquired in childhood through the process of socialization, often in the context of an emotionally charged relationship with parents, teachers, or other mentors" (p. 3). Our meaning perspectives guide the way in which we experience, feel, understand, judge, and act upon our situations. Another way to express meaning perspective is to think of it as a personal paradigm that involves both the cognitive and affective domains. This meaning paradigm gives a person the ability to form an interpretation of events and objects by applying these preconceived sets of ideas and beliefs.

Wilson and Burket (1989) expanded on Mezirow's definition of meaning perspectives by stating that meaning is based on how what we perceive matches with what we have been led to perceive by our particular psychological and cultural experience. Freire (1984) noted that underlying assumptions and cognitions will guide a person's behavior and determine those perceptions which govern interpretation. Mezirow (1991, p. 43) identified three types of meaning perspectives which he outlined in his transformation theory. Epistemic meaning perspectives, pertains to the way we know and the uses that we make of knowledge. Sociolinguistic meaning perspectives determine the way we observe social behavior and cultural norms. And, psychological perspectives comprise the way we view ourselves and cope with internal factors. Some of the major influences that shape, limit, and distort meaning perspectives are presented as follows:

Epistemic Perspective

Developmental stage perspectives
 Cognitive/learning/intelligence styles
 Sensory learning preferences
 Frequency of events to identify patterns
 Scope of awareness
 External/internal evaluation criteria
 Global/detail focus
 Concrete/abstract thinking
 Reflectivity

Sociolinguistic Perspectives

Social norms/roles
 Cultural/language codes
 Language/truth games
 Common sense as cultural system
 Secondary socialization
 Ethnocentrism
 Prototypes/scripts
 Philosophies/theories

Psychological Perspectives

Self-concept
 Locus of control
 Tolerance of ambiguity
 Lost functions--childhood prohibitions enforce by
 anxiety in adulthood
 Inhibitions
 Psychological defense mechanisms
 Neurotic needs
 Approach/avoidance
 Characterological preferences

The premise that has been established is we tend to accept and integrate experiences that fit comfortably into our frame of reference and current meaning perspectives. Those that do not fit, we tend to reject and discount. Thus, our current frame of reference serves as the boundary condition for interpreting the meaning of an experience. Mezirow (1991) depicted through a model the dynamics

involved in making an interpretation. The actions described move in sequence from the outer to the inner part of the diagram. He illustrated,

We project symbolic models (outermost area) as we perceive objects or events by scanning and then construing. We resort first to presentational construal and then, if necessary, to propositional construal. Meaning is made both perceptually and cognitively. To move from a perceptual interpretation to a cognitive interpretation requires propositional construal (monitored by presentational awareness) and an imaginative insight. Propositional (cognitive) construal may give coherence to either a new experience or an old one as it become validated through reflective assessment (p. 33).

Reflectivity

Reflective assessment becomes an essential process in understanding our framework and ultimately leading to change. Brookfield (1987) refers to this process of reflectivity as "critical thinking". He expounded that in adulthood we are often prone to call into question the validity of norms, values, and beliefs that we were encouraged as children to accept as general rules. Through this critical analysis (reflectivity) we challenge the assumptions we were socialized to accept uncritically in childhood.

For Dewey (1993, p. 9), reflection referred to "assessing the grounds of one's beliefs", the process of rationally examining the assumptions by which we have been

justifying our convictions. Boud, Keough, and Walker (1985) extended Dewey's definition to include attending to the grounds of one's feelings as well as one's beliefs. Nowak (1981) also validated the necessity of "feeling awareness". He claimed that to feel the experience differs from to know about the experience. "The first condition for emergency of perspective transformation is to feel experience, to redevelop original trust in one's senses, and interact between mind and body" (p. 39).

Mezirow (1991) identified the central function of reflection as that of validating what is known. Uncritically assimilated meaning perspectives which determine what, how, and why we learn, may be transformed through critical reflection. "Reflection is the process of critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience" (p. 104). Based on these beliefs, Mezirow distinguished among three types of reflection. Content reflection is an examination of the content or description of a problem. Diagnosing and examining these specifics answer questions like "What is going on?" or "What is the problem here?" Process reflection involves checking on the problem-solving strategies that are being used. Questions asked would be "Do I understand this problem?" or "Have I considered all the aspects?" Premise reflection takes place when the problem itself is questioned. This type of reflection leads the individual to a transformation of meaning perspectives because it asks questions like "Is this thinking valid?" or "What is the basis for my belief?" Sequentially, self-reflective learning focuses on gaining a clearer understanding of

oneself by identifying the assumptions acquired earlier in life that have become dysfunctional in adulthood.

Kitchener and King's (1990) model of reflective judgment described changes in assumptions about sources and certainty of knowledge and how decisions are justified in light of those assumptions. The seven stage process takes a learner from a "single-category belief system" to the realization that "knowing" is uncertain and subject to interpretation. Merriam & Caffarella (1991) reiterated that critically reflecting upon our lives, becoming aware of "why" we attach the meanings we do to reality, may be the most significant distinguishing characteristic of adult learning.

Schon (1987) supported the concept of reflective practice in the education arena. He argued that schools normative curriculum and separation of research from practice leave no room for what he terms "reflection-in-action". Kitchener and King (1990) also supported this same conclusion with their data suggesting that second meaning perspectives do not develop until the adult years and that it is usually tied to participation in advanced education. "Since our data also suggest that those of the same age without higher education score more similarly to younger subjects of the same educational level, we believe that education does make a difference" (p. 174).

Process of Perspective Transformation

The achievement of perspective transformation is very personal, intimate, and individual. Since it happens within the individual in response to a particular set of

stimuli and reflections, it is impossible to prescribe or describe the exact process which takes place regarding a perspective transformation. Based on case studies, several researchers have attempted to explicate those components necessary to impede the transformation process.

Boyd and Myers (1988) described transformation as "an event requiring an evolving integration between two unique journeys, an inner journey into Self as well as an outer journey into the existential world" (p. 280). Continuing to employ the journey metaphor, they identified three critical questions which serve as guidelines for the on-going process of transformation. They concluded that failing to consider the following questions jeopardizes transformation from the outset. They are (1) Is the person learning to develop dialogues between the ego and the other components of the Self? (2) Is the person learning to develop awareness and understanding of the way in which cultural symbols impact upon their life? and (3) Is the person learning to develop awareness and understanding of symbols and the processes of symbolization?

Nowak (1981) stated that changes in perspectives occur as the individual moves from childhood to adulthood, or when life's circumstances cast the person in a new situation or environment that forces change. He expounded that individual conscious transformations do not constitute a perspective transformation -- a change in total life perspective -- but they do constitute breakthroughs which prepare the individual for perspective transformation and encourage him/her to risk a total change in perspective. Nowak identified in his research three conditions which he

feels are basic to achieving perspective transformation: (1) really feeling the experience -- getting in touch with original truth; (2) internalization of seven principles (polarity, causality, force, reality, change, and responsibility); and (3) development and use of abilities which make the principles operational (faith, courage, freedom).

Within the framework of transformative learning theory, Cranton (1994b) addressed instructional development as a process of faculty becoming aware of their assumptions about teaching and revising these assumptions based on critical self-reflection. A main goal of faculty developers, then, is that faculty make their basic assumptions explicit, reflect on those assumptions, perhaps revise them, and act on the revisions. She extended that if basic assumptions are not challenged, change will not take place. A "challenge" could come from the questions of another person, from an event or new experience, or from a change in context. Instructional development, challenges could come from discussion with peers, discussion with an instructional developer, new information from reading, feedback from students, feedback from a colleague who observed the teaching or course materials, a change in teaching assignment, or involvement in a curriculum review or innovative project.

Mezirow (1991, p. 169) has probably distinguished a more comprehensive view of the working of perspective transformation by identifying a ten phase process. These phases are as follows:

1. A disorienting dilemma.
2. Self-examination with feelings of guilt or shame.

3. A critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural, or psychic assumptions.
4. Recognition that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change.
5. Exploration of options for new roles, relationships, and actions.
6. Planning of a course of action.
7. Acquisition of knowledge and skills for implementing one's plans.
8. Provisional trying of new roles.
9. Building of competence and self-confidence in new roles and relationships; and,
10. A reintegration into one's life on the basis of conditions dictated by one's new perspective.

As a result of passing through this ten step process, perspective transformation can involve an empowered sense of self, more critical understanding of how one's social relationships and culture have shaped one's beliefs and feelings, and more functional strategies and resources for taking action. This final step of change ultimately leads to the integration of new meaning and interpretation. Even though the outlined phases of transformation appear simple, Mezirow warned that such learning is painful because it often involves a comprehensive reassessment of

oneself and the very criteria that one has been using to make crucial value judgments about life. Increasing awareness of one's situation involves moving from the lowest level of consciousness, where there is no comprehension of how forces shape one's life, to the highest level of critical consciousness (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). "Upon reflection, one can decide not to change one's behavior, or a change in behavior may be delayed because one lacks dependable information, requisite skills, or the emotional commitment to proceed" (Mezirow, 1992, p. 251).

Brookfield (1987), who has written one of the most comprehensive frameworks for critical thinking, suggested a similar process to Mezirow's in a five-phase model that portrays the learner as passing through a number of identifiable and commonly experienced phases. These phases are: (1) a triggering event, (2) an appraisal of the situation, (3) an exploration to explain anomalies, (4) development of alternative perspectives, and (5) integration of new perspectives. In describing the appropriate environment for this process to develop, Brookfield depicted several things that would be happening in a group exhibiting these phases.

The two central activities in which group members would be engaged would be those of identifying and challenging assumptions, and exploring alternative ways of thinking and acting. Diversity and divergence would be accepted, even encouraged, so that in problem-solving groups there would be no attempts to bring matters to some form of artificial resolution. Flexibility of format and direction would be welcomed. Risk taking and spontaneity would be valued. Facilitators would model openness and critical analysis. There

would be no presumption that perfection is the chief characteristic of successful facilitation. And there would be skepticism of final answers (p.71).

Several factors which would encourage and foster this "transformative" environment are self-worth, listening attentively, reflective listening, and critical teaching. These elements provide a sense of trust for enabling the process of transformation to occur.

Another framework for understanding the perspective transformation process was introduced by Tennant and Pogsdon (1995) through a cyclical process characterized by growth and development. Their 4 T's theory is integrated into a comprehensive view of adult development with biological, sociological, and psychological influences as forces affecting the process: transaction deals with the internal and external elements causing a change in one's meaning perspective; transition is an inner disturbance characterized by a time of reflectivity or personal reckoning in which repair and reconstruction efforts are contemplated; transformation is the revision of one's belief system; and, transcendence is accepting the past as finished, recognizing the possibilities of building upon changes incurred, and the development of a sense of fulfillment in life.

The self-renewal or internal realization experienced through transformation can be likened to a person becoming self-actualized. One of the psychologists who have contributed the most to the understanding of learning from this perspective is Abraham Maslow (1970). He believed a person must attend to lower level needs before advancing up the hierarchy to a higher level of fulfillment. Maslow theorized

that a need created tension or discomfort and the resultant behavior resulted in moving the individual up through the hierarchy. This process of inner conscious change parallels perspective transformation as the individual experiences dissonance and moves to understanding and change.

In 1980, Hersey devised a variation of Maslow's hierarchy by placing it on a frequency distribution. Hersey assumed that instead of satisfying one need at a time, we are constantly dealing with reducing discomfort in all of the needs. One just happens to be more predominant at a given time. A study conducted by Brennan and Piechowski (1991) showed that self-actualizing persons shared a similar outlook and concern for humanity and its future. Another similarity was their intensity, energy, and persistence in working toward high ideals. In their life histories, they shared both emotionally difficult and disruptive life experiences and intense life-affirming experiences. They concluded that based on these findings, the adult educator has a responsibility to provide a context in which life experiences can be explored and evaluated. Whereas schooling sometimes is seen as oppressive and a restriction to individual growth, adult education can be a means to liberate the consciousness from social and structural confines (Davison, 1989).

Implications for Adult Education

Adult education is that activity which assist adults in the quest for a greater sense of control in their own lives. This perception of control affects their interpersonal relationships and the social forms and structures within which they live

(Brookfield, 1985). Mezirow (1990) challenged that every adult educator has a central responsibility for fostering transformative learning. The educator assists the adult to reflect on the manner by which values, beliefs and behaviors previously were established. Through presenting alternative ways of interpreting the world to adults, the educator prompts individuals to consider ways of thinking and living alternative to those they already possess. Adult education writers focus on facilitators encouraging learners to scrutinize critically the values, beliefs, and assumptions they have uncritically assimilated from the dominant culture. Educators should challenge learners to engage in a critical scrutiny of the assumptions, values, and norms undergirding their ideas and actions (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991).

The essence of adult education is to help learners construe experience in a way that allows them to understand more clearly the reasons for their problems and the action options open to them so they can improve the quality of their decision making. Andragogy is the professional perspective which adult educators should reflect to assist adults to learn in a way that enhances them. Helping adults elaborate, create, and transform their meaning perspectives through reflection on their content, the process by which they were learned, and their premises is what andragogy is all about (Mezirow, 1991).

Perspective transformation is a mode of adult learning that neither learner nor educator is able to anticipate or evoke upon demand. "The four processes of learning -- extending meaning perspectives, creating new ones, transforming old ones, and transforming perspectives-- always occurs in the context of the learner's

line of action, reflecting his/her intention, purpose, and feelings" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 212).

Nowak (1981) offered an extensive outline of suggestions for achieving perspective transformation, but firmly realized that all the educator can do is to assist the individual to identify and break loose from the learned structure. Change is not demanded but only explored as new options and choices are available.

Of course encouraging the learner to challenge and transform meaning perspectives raises some ethical questions. For example, Mezirow (1991) questioned is it unethical for an educator to:

- * Intentionally precipitate transformative learning without making sure that the learner fully understands that such transformation may result?
- * Facilitate a perspective transformation when its consequences may include dangerous or hopeless actions?
- * Decide which among a learner's beliefs should become questioned or problematized?
- * Present his or her own perspective, which may be unduly influential with the learner?
- * Refuse to help a learner plan to take action because the educator's personal convictions are in conflict with those of the learner?
- * Make educational interventions when psychic distortions

appear to impede a learner's progress if the educator is not trained as a psychotherapist?

Mezirow believed that all of these things, if done properly, are ethical. The adult educator must accept the learner's initial learning priorities, but the educator is not ethically bound to confine the learner to his/her initial limitations or constraints.

"The educator's objective should be only that the learner learn freely and decide, on the basis of the best information available, whether or not to act and, if so, how and when" (p. 203).

It is imperative that adult educators become an active part of the transformation process. They have a central responsibility for fostering critical reflections and individual transformation. When a facilitator conceives the role as a helper of learning, it becomes easier to focus on the real truth of education which is providing a successful educational experience in which people are helped to learn and change. Imel (1995) explored the differences in teaching adults and noted that not all learning is transformative in nature. However, educators have the responsibility to set the stage and provide opportunities for critical reflection which leads to transformation.

Cranton (1994a) discussed several methods for stimulating transformative learning which include journal writing, experiential approaches, and critical incidents. These activities provide a unique and effective means of leading learners from the specific to the general in understanding their underlying assumptions and beliefs. As importantly, Cranton determined the educator's role in supporting

transformative learning. Being authentic, fostering group interaction, encouraging learner networks, and supporting action are among several guidelines adult educators should consider when working with adult learners.

Thinking critically and reflectively is one of the important ways in which we become adults. Using critical reflection, it is through the process of perspective transformation that we become actively engaged in creating our personal and social worlds. It is fundamental that adult educators possess the knowledge and skills to effectively create the environment for transformative learning.

Summary

Adult education literature contains many descriptions of the nature of adult learners and how these characteristics affect learning. These discussions refer to adult learners as having a unique set of characteristics and needs; experiencing certain life situations and cycles; and, encountering internal changes and personal alterations.

In order to better understand working toward transformative learning for the adult learner, Mezirow formulated a theory of personal transformation which identifies an individual's meaning perspectives. Challenging these values, beliefs, and assumptions can lead to what is identified as perspective transformation. This transformational experience should be a major goal of adult education.

There was limited literature to describe and relate factors which might be used to facilitate and promote perspective transformation in an educational program,

especially through a nontraditional model. The adult educator must find ways to assist the adult in reflecting on past beliefs and exploring alternative ways of thinking. When one of the major goals for the adult learner is to promote internal change, ethical issues should be taken into account as the educator is promoting and facilitating the process of perspective transformation.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to examine the process of perspective transformation among adult students completing a nontraditional undergraduate degree program. A theory of transformative learning was used to determine to what extent perspective transformation was experienced by the student, and to identify critical incidents which promote the transformation process.

The research questions addressed in this investigation were:

1. To what extent is perspective transformation experienced among adult students in a nontraditional, undergraduate degree completion program?
2. What critical incidents were identified during the educational experience which supported perspective transformation?

Chapter III describes the research design; study population and sampling techniques; procedures used including instrumentation, data collection, and the methods of data analysis.

Research Design

This study is a between methods, two-phase design using quantitative and qualitative methodology. A between methods approach is one in which the researcher uses multiple methods of data collection drawing between qualitative and quantitative data collection procedures. The idea of combining qualitative and

quantitative approaches in a single study allows a researcher to explore different facets of a phenomenon and adds scope and breadth to a study (Creswell, 1994). Denzin (1979) used the term triangulation to argue for the combination of methodologies. The concept of triangulation was based on the assumption that any bias inherent in particular data sources, investigators, or methods would be neutralized when used in conjunction with combined sources.

In order to eliminate bias and answer the research questions, the first phase of the study was a pre-post, quasi-experimental survey research study selected to determine to what extent perspective transformation was experienced among adult students. The purpose of quantitative research is to generalize from a sample to a population so that inferences can be made about the characteristics, attitude, or behavior of the population (Babbie, 1990). Using a deductive form of logic, the intent of the study was to develop generalizations that contribute to the theory and that enable one to better predict, explain, and understand some phenomenon.

Additionally, a qualitative latent content analysis approach was utilized to determine critical incidents within the educational experience which could foster perspective transformation. Qualitative research is descriptive in that the researcher is interested in process, meaning, and understanding gained through words, pictures or narrative analysis (Merriam, 1988). This methodology uses an inductive logic approach to explore emerging categories, themes, and patterns which help explain the phenomenon.

Study Population and Sampling

Since 1986, Southern Nazarene University has worked with adults who wish to complete their Bachelor of Science degree. These are individuals who are at least 25 years of age, employed full-time, and also have at least two years of college credit. Through additional life-learning credit and completion of a series of ten, five-week modules, Management of Human Resources (MHR) students can complete their college degree in about 13 months. The program also includes an applied research project which addresses change in an organization. In addition to the Oklahoma City campus, the School of Adult Studies has a Del City classroom site and a program center at Tulsa, Oklahoma. Those locations provide a reasonable close access where students can meet for class one evening each week with their instructors and cohort groups.

The population consisted of all adult students enrolled in the MHR degree completion program during the period of January 1995 through May 1996. That population included 183 students at the Oklahoma City/Del City location and 89 students at the Tulsa Center, for a total population of 272. A gender classification for the population reflected 143 male students and 129 female students. For this study a purposive, convenience sample was used. The sample consisted of 30 males and 32 females, for a sample total of 62. These participants were selected by their program starting date which was scheduled in January, 1995.

Procedures

Instrumentation

Data were collected through the use of two different instruments.

Quantitative data were collected using the Personal Orientation Inventory (POI, 1963). Qualitative data were authenticated by text analysis of an assigned written reflections paper, submitted at the completion of the Management of Human Resources program.

The POI consisted of 150 two-choice comparative-value-judgment items reflecting values and behavior seen to be of importance in the development of the self-actualizing individual (Appendix A). Briefly, such persons may be described as those who utilize their talents and capabilities more fully than the average person, live in the present rather than dwelling on the past or the future, function relatively autonomously, and tend to have a more benevolent outlook on life and on human nature than the average person (Knapp, 1990).

In responding to the POI, the respondent is asked to select the one statement in each pair that is more true of him/herself. This is described as "paired opposites," in which each concept is presented in terms of a positive and a negative statement on the continuum. Clinically derived scales, comprising items logically grouped into two major scales and ten subscales, are used in comparing the responses to normative samples. Items of each scale are not paired with those of other scales. The major scales are interpreted in terms of a time ratio and a support ratio. The time ratio (time-competence/time incompetence ratio) assesses the degree to which

one is reality oriented in the present and is able to bring past experiences and future expectations into meaningful continuity. The support ratio (inner-directed/other-directed ratio) defines relative autonomy by assessing a balance between other-directedness and inner-directedness. Other-directed persons tend to be dependent, whereas primarily inner-directed persons tend to be self-willed.

The subsidiary scales purport to tap values important in the development of the self-actualizing individual:

Self-Actualizing Value (SAV) measures the affirmation of primary values of self-actualizing people. A high score indicates that the individual holds and lives by values characteristic of self-actualizing people, while a low score suggests the rejection of such values.

Existentiality (Ex) measures the ability to situationally react without rigid adherence to principles. This measurement reflects the individuals flexibility in applying values or principles to one's life. It is a measure of one's ability to use good judgment in applying those general principles.

Feeling Reactivity (Fr) measures sensitivity or responsiveness to one's own needs and feelings. A high score indicates the presence of such sensitivity, while a low score suggests insensitivity to these needs and feelings.

Spontaneity (S) measures freedom to react spontaneously, or to be oneself. A high score measures the ability to express feelings in spontaneous action. A low score suggests that one is fearful of expressing feelings behaviorally.

Self-Regard (Sr) measures affirmation of self because of worth or strength.

A high score measures the ability to like oneself because of one's strength as a person. A low score suggests feelings of low self-worth.

Self-Acceptance (Sa) measures the affirmation or acceptance of oneself in spite of one's weaknesses or deficiencies. A high score suggests acceptance of self and weaknesses, and a low score suggests inability to accept one's weakness.

Nature of Man-Constructive (Nc) measures the degree of one's constructive view of the nature of man. A high score suggests that one sees man as essentially good and can resolve the good-evil, masculine-feminine, selfish-unselfish, and spiritual-sensual dichotomies in the nature of man.

Synergy (Sy) measures the ability to be synergistic, to transcend dichotomies. A high score is a measure of the ability to see opposites of life as meaningfully related. A low score suggests that one sees opposites of life as antagonistic.

Acceptance of Aggression (A) measures the ability to accept one's natural aggressiveness. A high score indicates the ability to accept anger or aggression within oneself as natural. A low score suggests the denial of such feelings.

Capacity for Intimate Contact (C) measures the ability to develop contactful intimate relationships with other human being, unencumbered by expectations and obligations.

Early studies using the POI were concerned with demonstration of the validity and reliability of this instrument. Shostrom (1972) demonstrated that POI scores significantly differentiated a sample of clinically nominated, self-actualizing individuals from a sample nominated as nonactualizing. This study provided

important initial evidence for the validity of the POI in that the Inventory was shown to discriminate between individuals who have been observed in their life behavior as having attained a relatively high degree of actualization, and those individuals who do not evidence such development.

Test re-test reliability coefficients have been obtained for the Personal Orientation Inventory scales based on a sample of 48 undergraduate college students. The Inventory was administered twice, a week apart, to the sample with the instructions that it was part of the experiment to take the Inventory twice. Reliability coefficients for the major scales of Time Competence and Inner-Direction are .71 and .77. Coefficients for the subscales range from .52 to .82. In general, the correlations obtained in the study are at a level commensurate with other personality inventories (Shostrom, 1972).

The qualitative instrumentation used for the study was an assigned comprehensive reflections paper submitted by participants at the completion of the program. This information represented primary material (information directly from the people studied) and recorded individual thoughts, feelings, impressions, and events regarding the educational experience. Validity of the qualitative component of the study was enhanced through the involvement of participants in a two-fold process of data collection. Reliability was strengthened by exploring multisite cases to determine similar patterns, events, and thematic constructs in different settings. Yin (1989) strongly suggested reporting a detailed protocol for data collection in qualitative case study research, so that the procedure might be replicated in another

setting.

Since the researcher is a critical instrument in the process of qualitative research, it is important to identify personal biases, values, and attitudes which are brought to the study. The Personal Orientation Inventory was taken by the researcher and could lend to bias in the interpretation of the study. Researcher POI scores fell above the standard mean score on nine of the twelve scales.

Additionally, this researcher's beliefs and perceptions of a non-traditional adult degree program have been formed by direct involvement with the Management of Human Resources program. As an administrator of the program the researcher is in a position to review policies, maintain direct contact with faculty, and assess evaluations on curriculum and instructors. As an instructor in the program the researcher is placed in direct contact with adult students enrolled and completing the process. Experiencing this ardent contact with the students encourages a mentoring relationship to develop and flourish. This connection provides an avenue for informal discussions and feedback regarding professional and personal growth. Because of these relationships personal biases are brought to the study by the researcher through preconceived expectations of students attitudes and perceptions.

Data Collection

Data were collected from January 1995 through May 1996. Participants were initially addressed in their assigned cohort groups during a scheduled class within the first module of the MHR program. The research was verbally explained by the

researcher and questions were answered openly. Subjects were asked to complete the Personal Orientation Inventory on self-actualization as a pre-test to the study. Those were then collected by the researcher in the classroom. The same cohort groups were re-administered the Personal Orientation Inventory during the last module of the MHR program. The researcher administered and collected the materials. Additionally, during the last module participants were asked to submit a 4-6 page reflections paper articulating individual thoughts, feelings, impressions, and events experienced during the 13-month program. Those were collected within a two-week period following the assignment. The before and after data were compiled, statistically analyzed, and reported. The qualitative data were reviewed, content analyzed, and reported.

Protection of Human Subjects

The data collection required participants to put names or ID numbers on the instrumentation. Individual consent forms were not requested, but it was explained that participation in the research was voluntary and that all identifying information would be removed during data analysis.

Approval for human subject participation was obtained from two sources. Southern Nazarene University granted approval as this was the institution where the researcher was employed and which offered the program from which subjects were drawn (Appendix B). Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board approval was sought as this was the institution granting the degree (Appendix C).

Data Analysis

Two analysis phases were performed to meet the purpose of this study. First, a quantitative phase used descriptive and inferential statistics set at an alpha level of $p = .05$. The qualitative phase was interpreted and summarized using a template coding technique for text analysis.

When the data for phase one of this research were analyzed, the means and standard deviations for pre and post test groups, as well as male and female students, were calculated. The data were presented in a table and plotted on a POI profile graph. The null hypothesis tested for this study was that a nontraditional degree completion program would have no affect on perspective transformation. The alternative hypothesis was the experience of a nontraditional degree completion program would result in increased degrees of perspective transformation. The analysis used to test the hypothesis was a paired t -test at the .05 level of significance.

The second phase was a qualitative design which used a template technique for text analysis. The template established clustered data which were obtained by using Tesch's (1990) eight step outline for engaging a systematic process of analyzing textual data. First, all transcripts were read to get a sense of the whole. Second, selected documents were reviewed to thematically analyze underlying meaning. Once identified, those units were sorted and organized into categories or codes. That process was achieved using a word cluster classification. The topics became major themes and were abbreviated as a coding system. The reliability of

the instrumentation lies in the identified word code. Codes were applied to the appropriate segments of the remaining text and represented in frequency tables and a dendrogram. Thematic analysis was narratively interpreted and reported.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

The purpose of this research was to examine the process of perspective transformation among adult students completing a non-traditional undergraduate degree program. The research questions were: (1) To what extent is perspective transformation experienced among adult students in a non-traditional, undergraduate degree completion program? (2) What critical incidents were identified during the educational experience which supported perspective transformation? This chapter includes a description of the sample and presentation of the data with a discussion of the findings related to the research questions.

Description of the Sample

Data were analyzed on a total of 62 subjects. Of those participants, approximately half were male (49%) and half female (51%). See Figure 1 for a graphic display of gender classification. The average age of all subjects was 34.3 years with an age range for the total sample of 25 to 53. All participants had at least 14 years of formal education and were classified as a college junior. The majority of subjects were married (71%), while the remaining participants designated a single or divorced status. Within all marital status positions, approximately half were male and half female. Figure 2 and Figure 3 depict the percentage of students in each marital status and gender classification within a specified status. Three

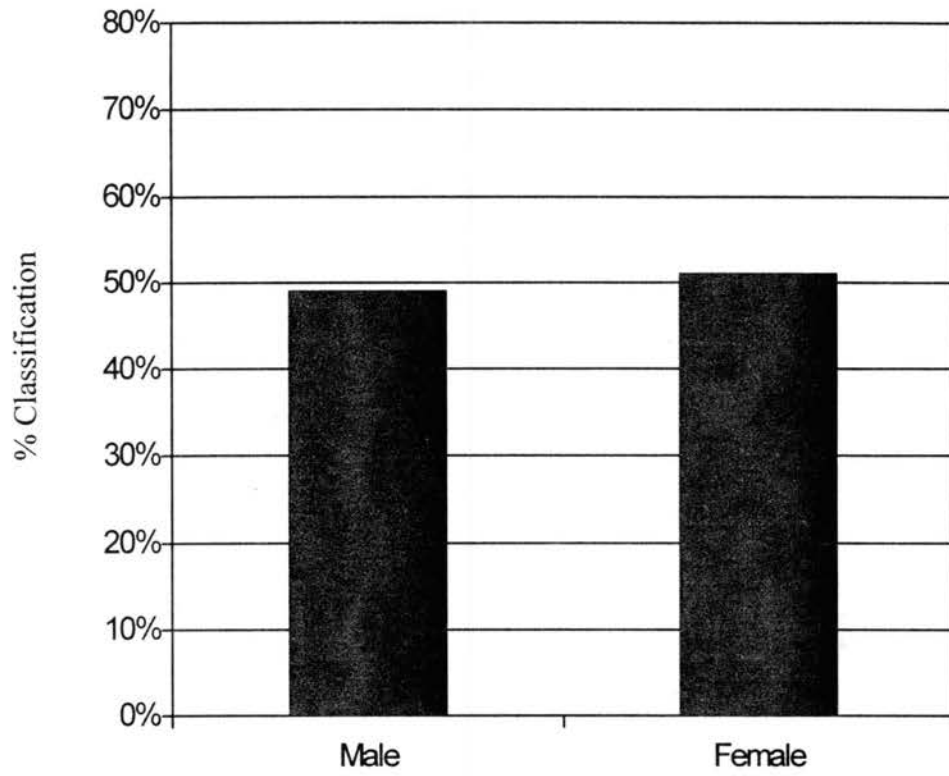


Figure 1. Summary of Gender Classification of Participants
(N=62)

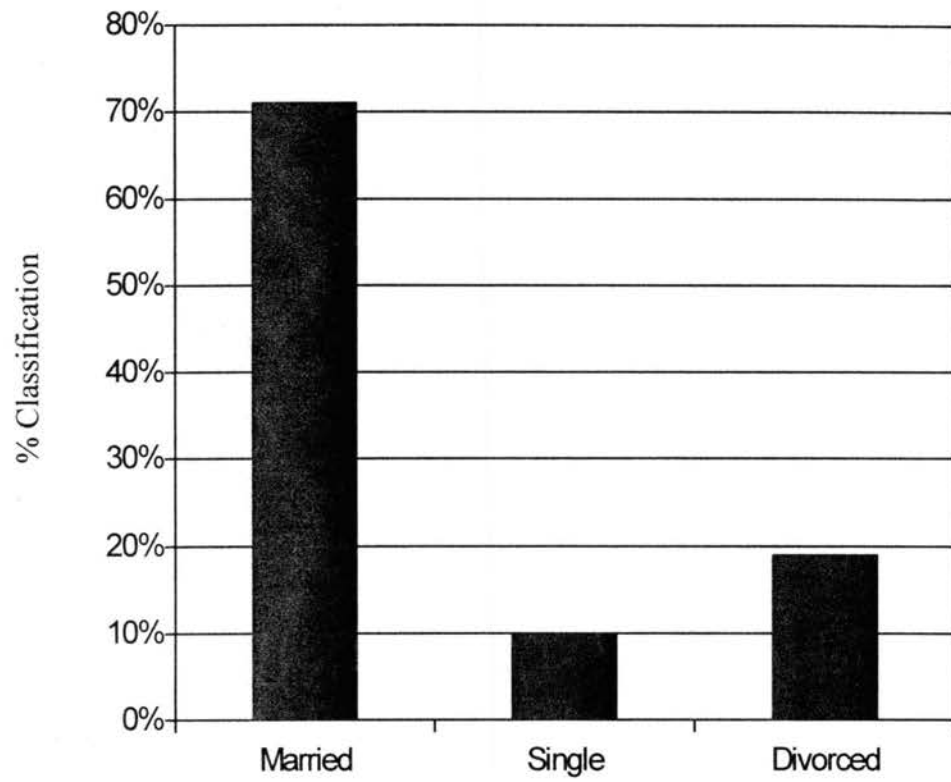


Figure 2. Summary of Marital Classification of Participants
(N=62)

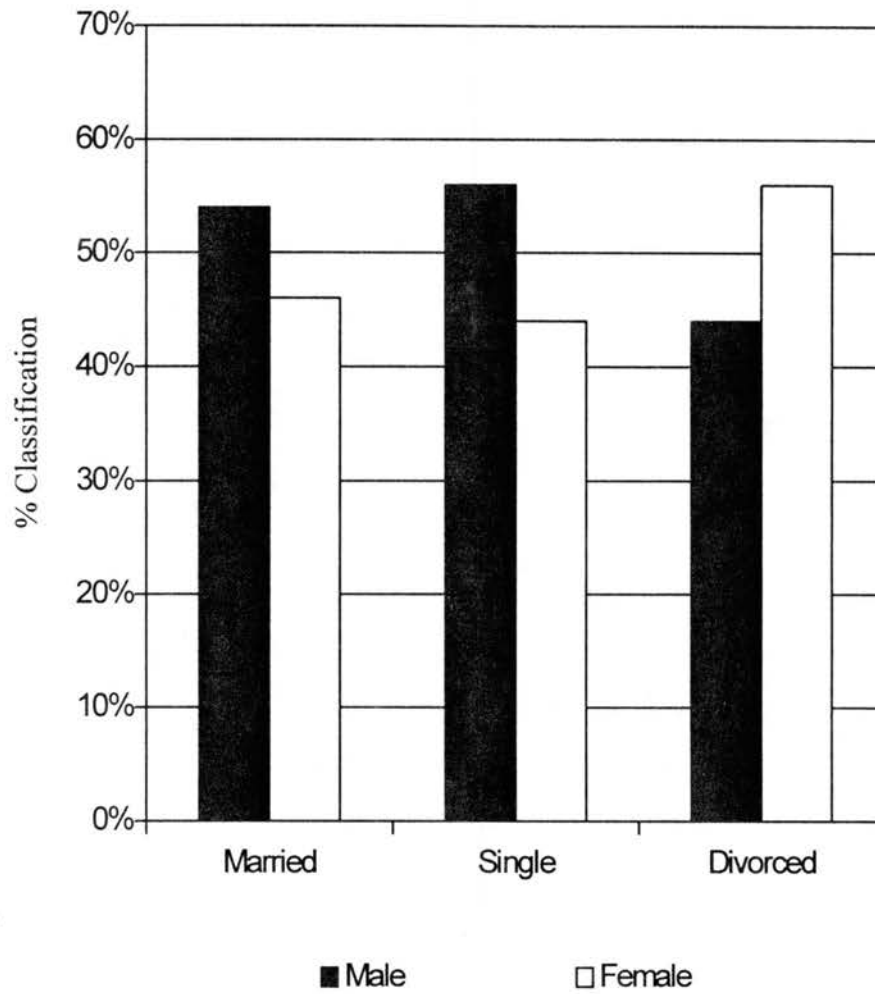


Figure 3. Distribution of Student Marital Classification Between Gender (N=62)

participants did not designate a marital position.

Data were further analyzed in relation to the occupation of the adult student upon entering the non-traditional degree completion program. Participants within a management position (20%) or with technical employment (21%) comprised the largest responses to professional classifications. Figure 4 contains data related to occupational characteristics of the subjects.

Results Related to the Research Questions

Research Question 1. To what extent is perspective transformation experienced among adult students in a non-traditional, undergraduate degree completion program? In analysis of the data, the overall profile evaluation of individuals entering and completing the non-traditional degree completion program reflected an insignificant increase in the level of self-actualization as a result of the educational experience. This evaluation was determined by profile scores on the POI. The mean and standard deviation for each scale are listed in Table I. Figure 5 graphically displays the pre/post POI profiles for adult students entering and completing the degree program. Both pre and post group scores for the two major scales, Time Competence and Inner/Other directed, fell below the standard mean score of 50 which classifies a person as self-actualized. However, an increase in the Inner/Other directed scale indicated a positive move toward self-actualization, pre=79.8; post=84.7. This scale is designed to measure whether an individual's mode of reaction is characteristically "self"oriented or "other" oriented. The Time

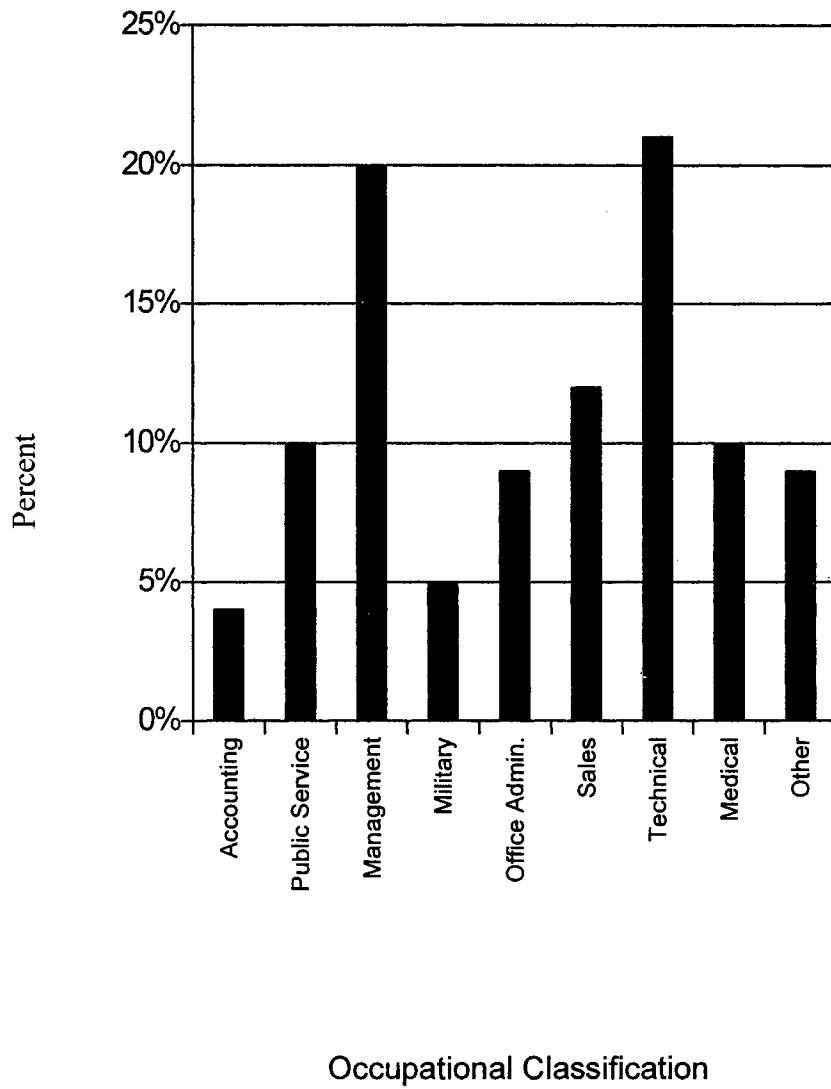


Figure 4. Summary of Occupation Classification of Participants
(N=62)

TABLE I

Mean and Standard Deviation of Scores of Adult Students Entering and Completing a Non Traditional Degree Program by POI Scale

POI Scale	Pre-Test		Post-Test	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Time Competent	16.2	2.6	15.3	2.7
Inner/Other Directed	79.8	9.3	84.7	10.0
Self-Actualizing Value	19.4	3.0	20.1	2.5
Existentiality	17.7	3.3	18.1	3.7
Feeling Reactivity	13.8	2.5	14.9	3.1
Spontaneity	11.8	2.2	12.3	2.2
Self-Regard	12.7	2.0	13.0	2.0
Self-Acceptance	13.6	2.8	14.3	3.1
Nature of Man, Constructive	10.9	2.4	11.6	2.6
Synergy	6.6	1.2	6.8	1.2
Acceptance of Aggression	14.9	2.9	15.5	3.4
Capacity for Intimate Contact	16.6	2.6	17.9	4.8
Sample Size N=62				

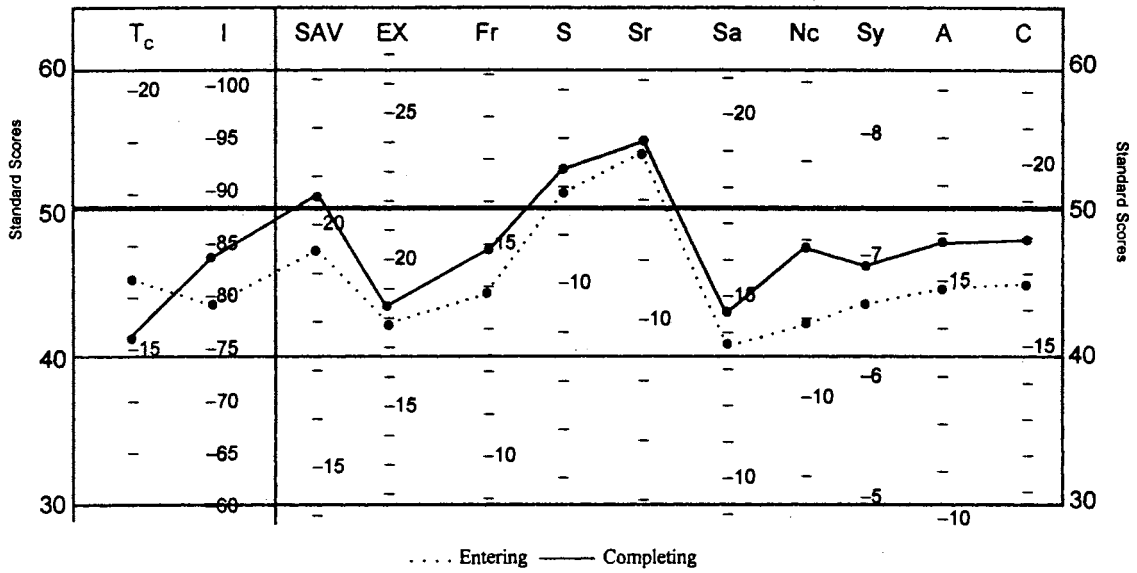


Figure 5. POI Profiles for Adult Students Entering and Completing a Non Traditional Degree Program

Competence scale was the only factor reflecting a decrease between pre and post mean group scores, pre=16.2; post=15.3. The Time Competence scale measures the degree to which the individual lives in the present as contrasted with the past or future.

Spontaneity and Self-Regard were the only two scales where scores for students entering the program scored above the standard mean score. In the post-test analysis, Spontaneity, Self-Regard, and the Self-Actualizing Value scales fell above the standard mean score reflecting a positive shift toward self-actualization.

Additionally, analysis of gender comparison for students entering the program reflected female students with an overall higher level of self-actualization (Table II).

Female students entered the program with a lower Time Competence score and Self Acceptance score than male participants but ranked higher on all other POI scales. Female scores fell above the standard mean on the Spontaneity and Self-Regard scales. No scores fell above the standard mean score for male students entering the program. Figure 6 displays POI profiles of male and female students entering the non-traditional degree completion program. Gender analysis of adult students completing the degree program reflect female students continuing to show higher degrees of self-actualization overall. At the completion of the program female students scored above the standard mean on the Self-Actualizing Value, Spontaneity, and Self Regard scales. Male students scored above the standard mean on Spontaneity and Self Regard scales. Figure 7 graphically shows a POI profile of male and female students completing the program.

TABLE II

Mean and Standard Deviation of Scores of Male and Female Adult Students Entering and Completing a Non Traditional Degree Program by POI Scale

POI Scale	Pre-Test					Post-Test				
	Male		Female		Mean Diff.	Male		Female		Mean Diff.
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.		Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.	
Time Competent	16.3	2.0	16.0	2.9	.30	14.9	2.6	15.9	2.8	1.00
Inner/Other Directed	78.4	9.5	81.1	8.4	2.70	84.0	9.7	85.1	10.9	1.10
Self-Actualizing Value	19.0	3.6	19.6	3.1	.68	19.9	2.5	20.6	2.7	.70
Existentiality	17.7	3.1	17.8	3.8	.10	18.1	3.4	18.3	3.7	.20
Feeling Reactivity	12.8	3.1	13.9	3.5	1.10	14.4	3.8	15.3	2.9	.90
Spontaneity	11.5	2.3	12.2	2.2	.70	12.0	2.2	12.7	2.1	.70
Self-Regard	11.5	2.2	13.0	2.0	1.50	12.8	2.4	13.5	1.3	.70
Self-Acceptance	13.9	3.4	13.0	2.0	.90	14.2	3.3	14.0	3.1	.20
Nature of Man, Constructive	10.8	2.2	11.1	2.6	.30	11.5	1.6	12.0	1.8	.50
Synergy	6.4	1.1	6.7	1.3	.30	6.8	1.1	6.8	1.3	0
Acceptance of Aggression	14.8	2.6	15.1	3.5	.30	15.8	2.6	15.5	3.2	.30
Capacity for Intimate Contact	16.8	2.5	16.3	3.2	.50	17.8	3.3	17.7	3.4	.10
Sample Size N=62										

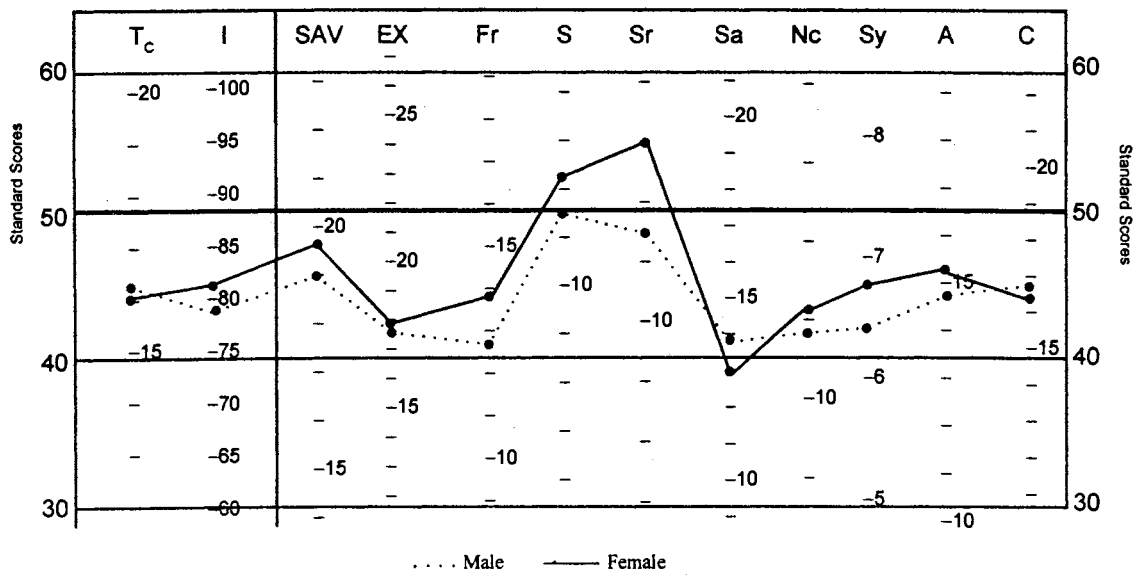


Figure 6. POI Profiles of Male and Female Adult Students Entering a Non Traditional Degree Program

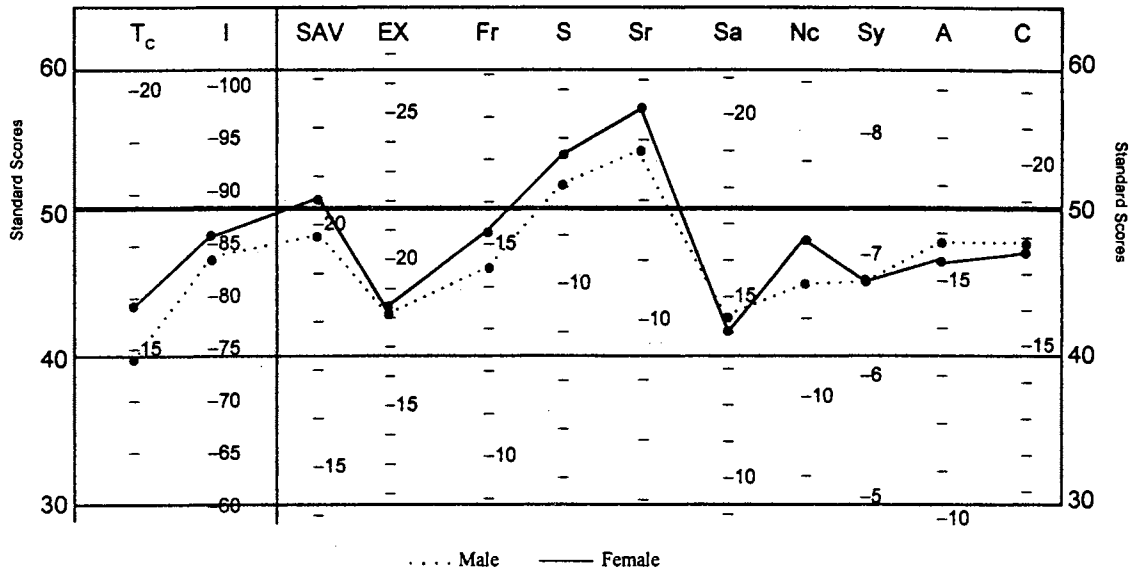


Figure 7. POI Profiles of Male and Female Adult Students Completing a Non Traditional Degree Program

Pre-post analysis of male and female participants entering and completing the program was conducted. Male students increased scores on all POI scales except for Time Competence, Entering=16.3; Finishing=14.9. Figure 8 presents comparisons of pre and post scores for male students. Female participants also increased scores on all POI scales except for Time Competence, Entering=16.0; Finishing=15.9. Figure 9 depicts scores for female students entering and completing the program.

The null hypothesis tested was that a non-traditional degree completion program for adult students would have no affect on the process of perspective transformation. Perspective transformation was measured using the POI. The t ratio was calculated for each of the ten scales: TC=.57; I=.52; SAV=.22; Ex=.08; FR=.01; S=.01; Sr=.15; Sa=.78; Nc=.12; Sy=.84; A=.11; C=.04. At 61 degrees of freedom, the calculated t value was checked for significance using a critical t of 2.00 at the .05 level of significance. Based on the findings of no significance, there is failure to reject the null hypothesis.

Research Question 2. What critical incidents were identified during the educational experience which supported perspective transformation? Reflection papers submitted by participants in the study were analyzed using a template technique. A coding design yielded five main themes which emerged from the analyzed text. These themes became coding categories for identified critical incidents which were perceived by the student as having significant influence on supporting and initiating personal change during the educational process. Each of

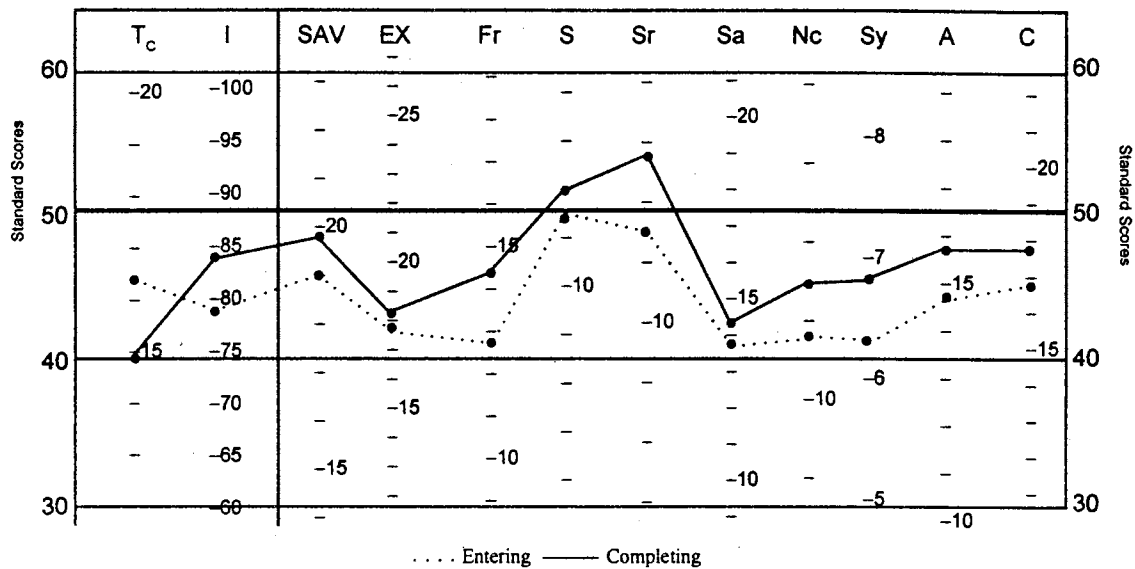


Figure 8. POI Profiles of Male Adult Students Entering and Completing a Non Traditional Degree Program

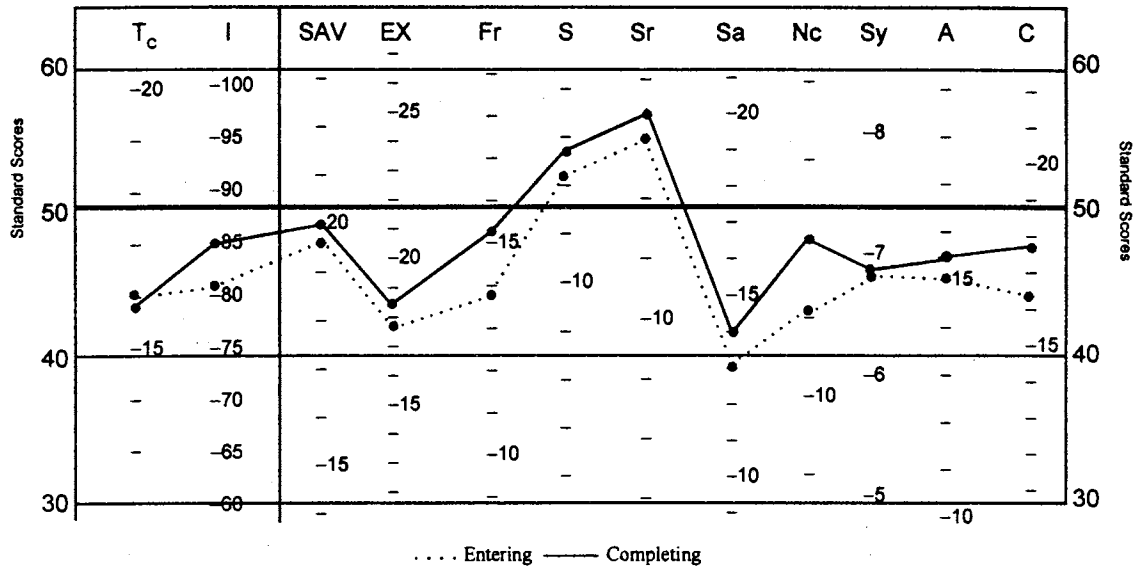


Figure 9. POI Profiles of Female Adult Students Entering and Completing a Non Traditional Degree Program

these identified themes revealed additional sub-clusters which were determined by a word count procedure. Figure 10 depicts the clustered units and level of commonality where the merger took place. Based on the text analysis, the major themes which emerged were recognized as program specific, skills oriented, confidence related, reflection oriented, and learning based. The opportunity for reflection during the educational process was the most significant theme of the program, 27%. Additionally, attitudes regarding specific logistics of the program model and enhanced skills were important themes. Figure 11 depicts the distribution of word clusters between major themes.

Comments which related specifically to the program model tended to reflect positive attitudes towards the utilization of teaching methods that are designed for adult learners; operational factors of a non-traditional format such as attending class one night a week and eliminating waiting for registration, bookstore, cashier; the atmosphere and climate created for adult learning; extreme helpfulness of faculty and staff; and the opportunity to work with other adults in a cohort group. Text analysis revealed a strong opinion that learning within the cohort group was a significant factor in changing attitudes and developing meaningful learning relationships. One student writes, *"I have valued the friendships I have attained in the past year. If one of us fell behind, we had another student telling us to get it in gear. We have laughed together and cried together. Each student is from a different background and culture environment, and for us to come together and work well with one another as a group, expressing our feelings and emotions with one*

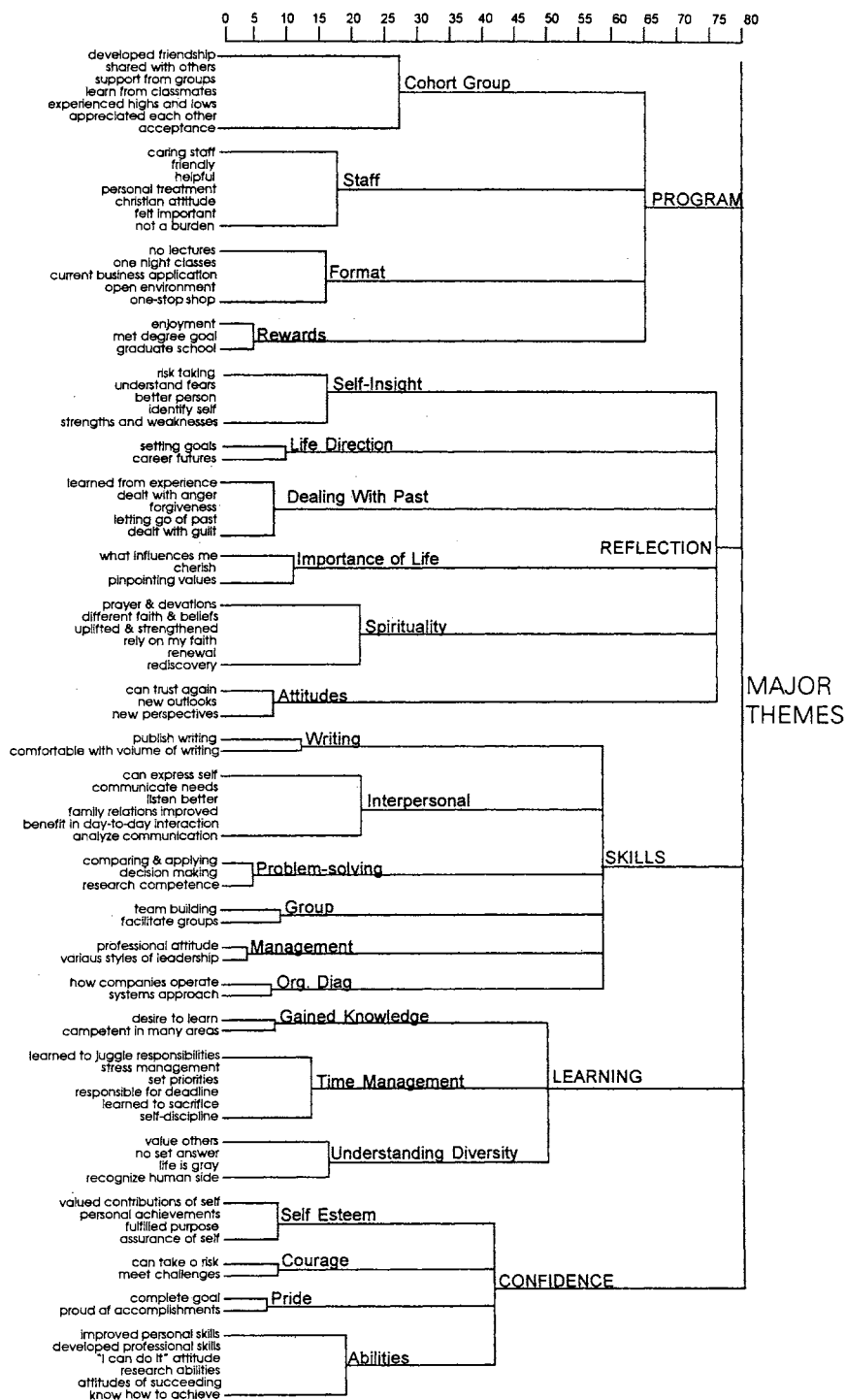


Figure 10. Dendrogram of Clustering Themes

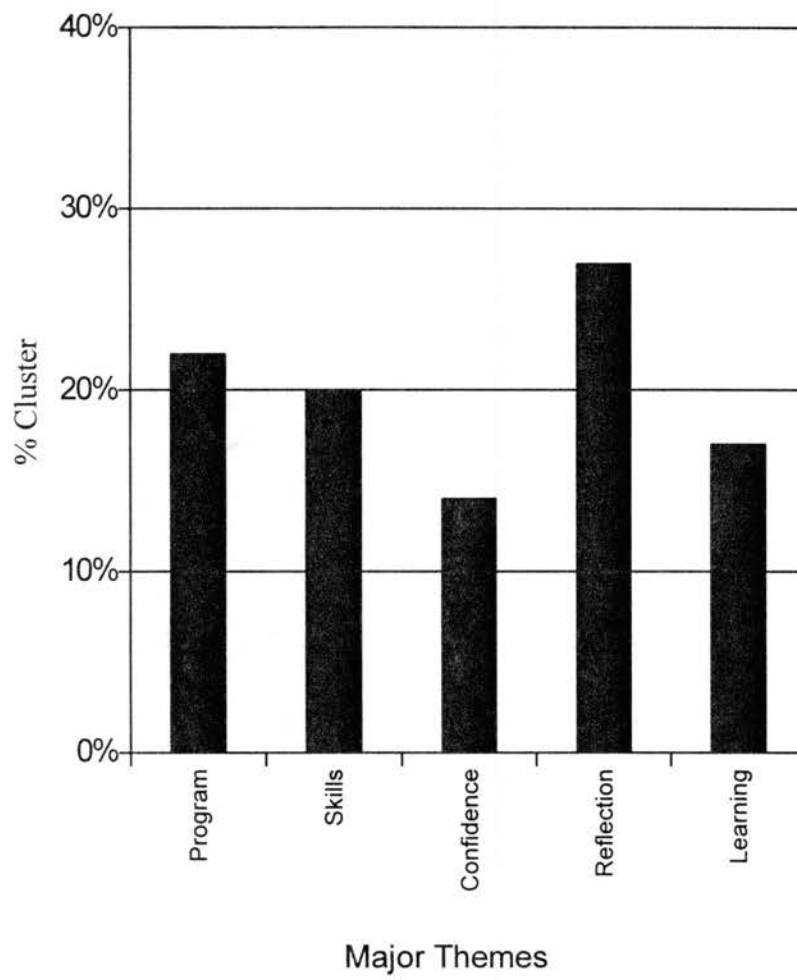


Figure 11. Distribution of Word Cluster Between Major Themes

another is very special." Regarding the curriculum another student writes, "I spent a lot of time reading and writing but not a lot of time cramming in worthless information that I would not retain beyond a test or apply in real life situations. Most of the material covered in the modules I have applied in real life situations or have seen someone else using a tool that I had recently learned about."

Another attribute that students believed was vital was the working relationship with faculty and staff. Students praised not only positive relationships with instructors but staffing throughout the entire process. Equally as important appeared to be the format and philosophy of the program. *"The adult learning environment helped me to understand how to apply the knowledge that was being taught as opposed to just memorizing the information. The format of the lectures with group discussion and participation also enhanced the learning process."*

Figure 12 displays the word count percentage for comments dealing specifically with program theme.

Another emerging theme dealt with the students perception of improved skills. Analyses revealed that 36% specifically articulated they have heightened their ability to handle interpersonal relationships more effectively, *"I have a better understanding of differences in people and how those differences affect communication. My personal and professional relationships have improved because of my ability to articulate more effectively what I need, how I am feeling, and how to enhance the communication process."* Improved written skills (22%) were also noted as having a positive impact on the student's perception of his/her ability to

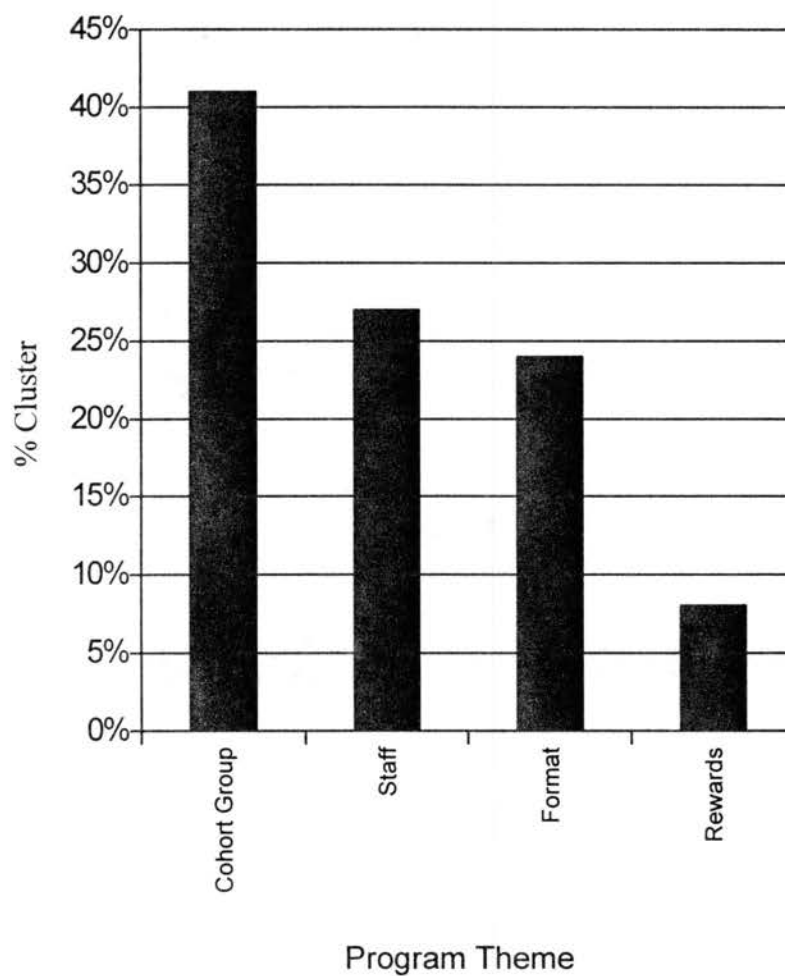


Figure 12. Frequency of Word Cluster Among Program Theme

succeed and "get the job done". Additionally students feel that they have improved their skills in management, problem-solving, group communication, and organizational diagnosis. The frequency of word count among those clusters is presented in Figure 13.

The awareness communicated by students regarding their skill ability led to another emerging theme which reflected an increase in confidence levels. This sense of increased confidence was evidence to participants regarding their self-esteem, the courage to accomplish tasks, a feeling of pride, and most importantly the belief that they have the abilities to cope and deal with whatever is presented to them professionally and personally. Confidence in relationship to personal abilities comprised almost half (45%) of the cluster. Figure 14 displays the frequency within the confidence theme clusters. One student described the spectrum of confidence as she writes, *"My self-esteem was quite low when I entered the program and through personal achievements and freedom of creativity, I have become much stronger. I am to be accountable for the things I have control over and have the confidence in my abilities to meet deadlines, perform in an acceptable manner, and strive for excellence."*

The most significant theme which materialized as a result of the text analysis was the opportunity and ability for students to reflect in a variety of avenues. Some of the strongest statements regarding personal change and transformation came as a result of writing autobiographies, assessing career goals and personal direction, and exploring spiritual beliefs. One student writes, *"I think the most important thing I*

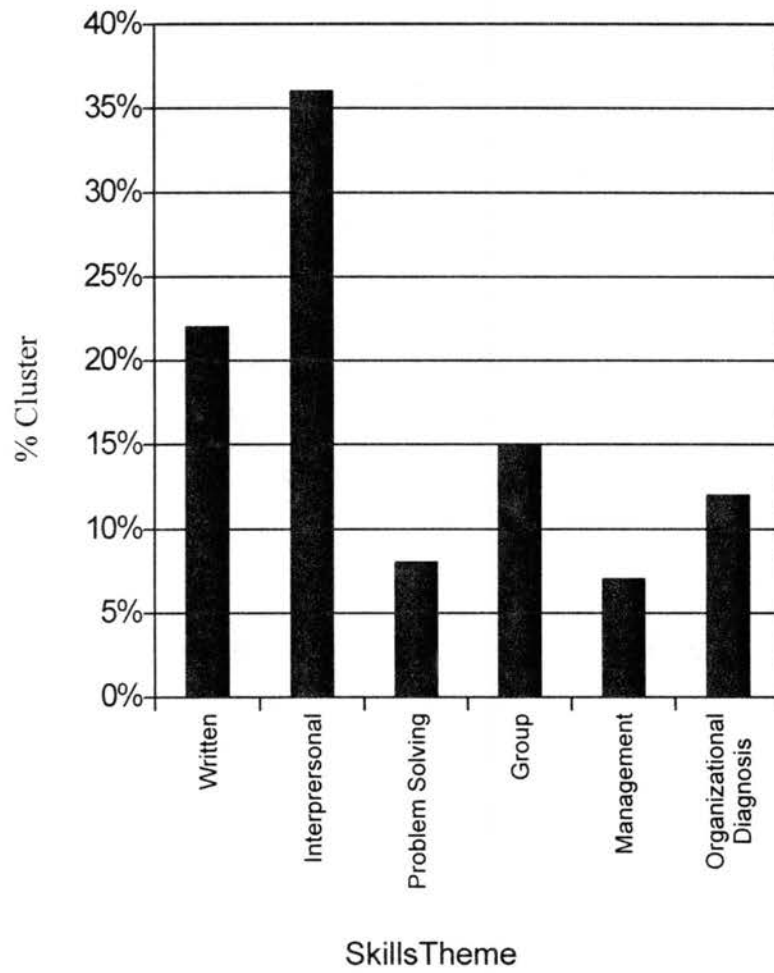


Figure 13. Frequency of Word Cluster Among Skills Theme

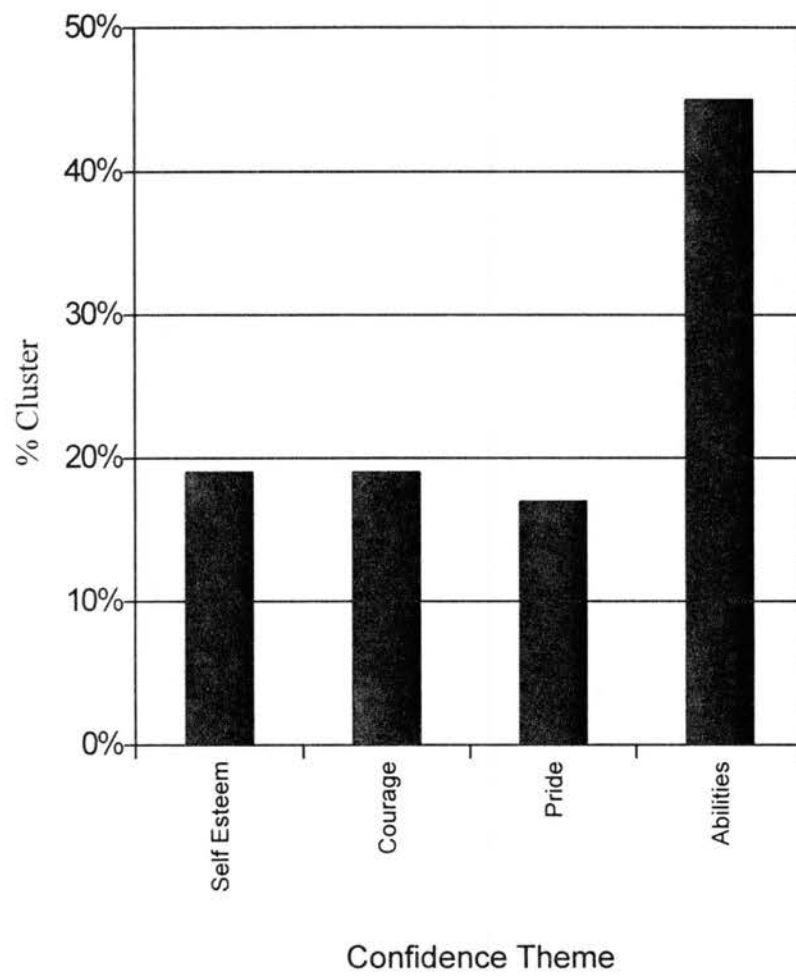


Figure 14. Frequency of Word Cluster Among Confidence Theme

learned throughout the entire program was about myself. The program allowed me to recognize my need to know who I am before I can effectively apply the knowledge I have gained from this experience." Another illustrates, *"Capturing my life story - my fears, my failures, as well as my accomplishments - was a lot of work. I had to be honest and face many difficult, painful issues I had not properly reconciled and which had caused me to become frozen in time.... Because of this, I have become more detached from old fears and limitations."* Analyses revealed that the reflection of one's spirituality was a critical aspect of reflectivity (29%). In relation to the Values course several students reflect *"...I believe the topics discussed are very foundational for what my values and beliefs are today, and the opportunity to write about them reinforced their meaning in my life."* *"...The course has encouraged me to open some doors of the past which are easier to keep closed. Yet, I have been uplifted and strengthened by pinpointing the values which are most important to me and making sure my life is consistent with those values."* *"...Values was a very emotional class for me. It was a time for reflecting back over my life and realizing why I live the way I do. This class helped me to let go of some of the anger I felt because of experiences in my youth. It was a time of realizing how important and valuable my family is."* Figure 15 represents all the clusters in the reflection theme.

Students communicated several key areas of growth and insight they had learned as a result of the educational program. The most valuable lesson resulting from the educational experience was time management (48%). This idea was not in reference to a "To Do list", but a philosophical position of learning how to prioritize

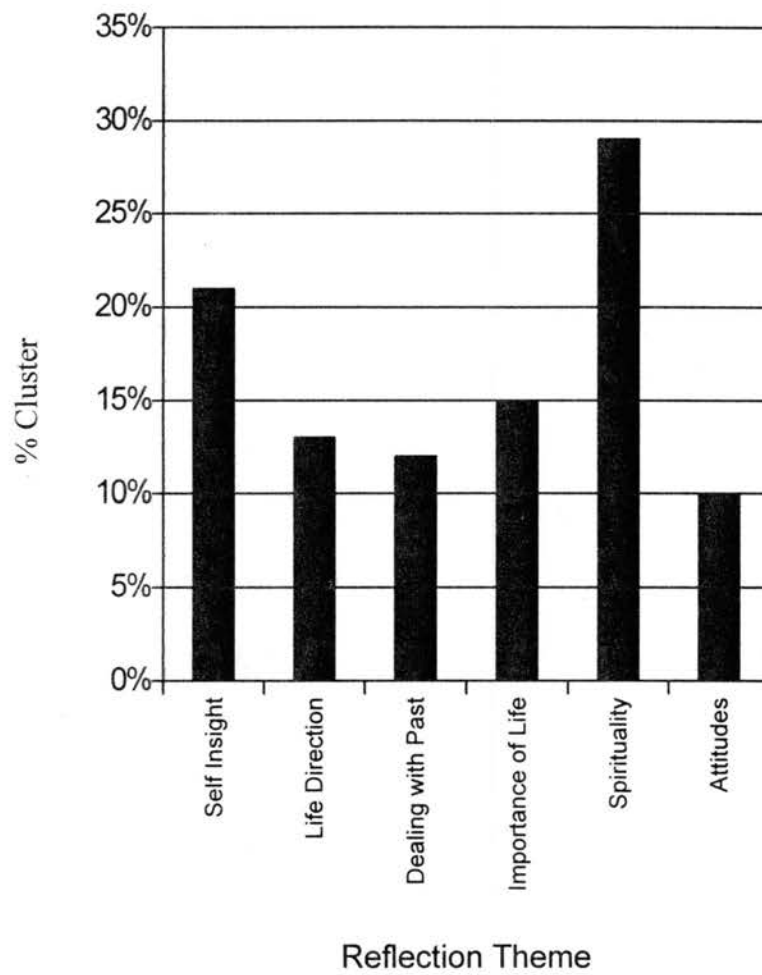


Figure 15. Frequency of Word Cluster Among Reflection Theme

and determine what is important to reach a designated goal. Students write, "... *the project experience taught me to become focused and set priorities. I have learned you must make sacrifices to achieve the things you want in life but in the long run it will be worth it.*" "... *Because of the commitment to obtaining my degree, I had to learn how to set priorities and spend quality time with my family.*"

Further analysis, in relation to the learning theme, identified the ability to understand and be more tolerant of differences in opinions and attitudes (34%). Students felt they could deal with people more effectively because of gained insight into diversity. "...*Before I enrolled at SNU I was a $2+2=4$ person, meaning I knew the answer was always 4 and it did not matter what formula was used to get the answer. I feel the MHR program taught me to recognize the human side of life. It taught me to recognize individuals use different formulas and sometimes even get different answers.*" Figure 16 depicts the frequency of word cluster among the learning theme.

Summary

This chapter contains the data analysis to describe participants in the research and answer the two research questions. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the sample. The research questions were answered in two phases using a quantitative and qualitative approach.

In regard to research question one, POI profile scores revealed an overall increase in all scales except Time Competence. Female students entered the program at a higher level of self-actualization and also experienced a larger degree

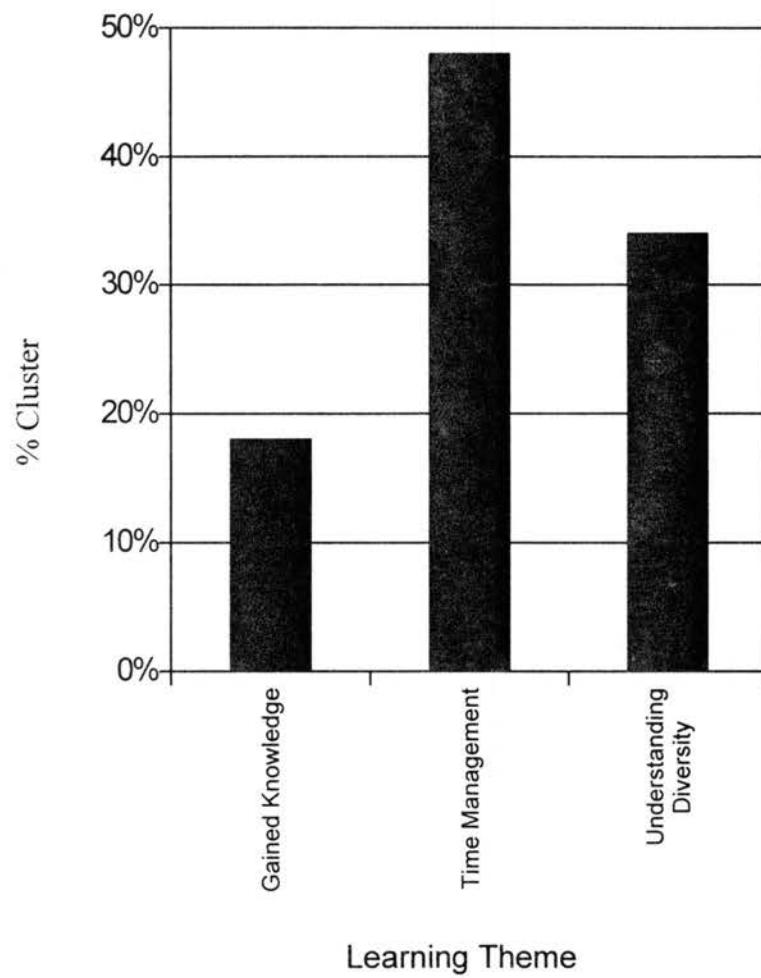


Figure 16. Frequency of Word Cluster Among Learning Theme

of change within the program. An analysis of pre-post evaluation did not show statistical significance.

In regard to research question two, five major themes emerged from the text analysis as critical incidents. These themes included program specific observations, a belief of skills improvement for professional and personal responsibilities, an increased perception of confidence, the opportunity to self-reflect, and new knowledge regarding people and goal setting.

Within the program theme it was evident that the ability to learn within a cohort group was one of the most significant influences for adult students. This opportunity to share and learn with students at a similar developmental level, but with diverse experiences, had the greatest impact. Relationships with faculty and the overall program model were equally important in facilitating an environment conducive to change and growth. The common goal of being in school just to get a degree became less significant throughout the duration of the 13 month program.

Students illustrated, as a result of the program, their interpersonal skills were considerably higher and more refined. Their professional and personal relationships were improved because of the ability to communicate more effectively. From an organizational viewpoint, students believed they had improved their written skills and the capability to problem-solve, diagnosis the organization, and work effectively in groups.

The students' perspective that they had increased many of the skills necessary to be successful was also reflected in the confidence theme. This cluster illustrated

students significantly perceive themselves to have the abilities to accomplish any task as a result of their experience in the MHR program. Other aspects which exhibited improvement during the educational process were self-esteem, the courage to take risks, and a sense of pride in accomplishments.

Reflectivity was the most prominent theme emerging from the text analysis. Gaining a new insight into "self" and exploring spiritual aspects enabled the individual to deal with past experiences and issues, examine personal life direction, and prioritize what is important for successful living.

The acceleration and intensity of the MHR program influenced students in their learning of time management. The understanding of sacrifice in order to obtain a goal was a significant learning experience for participants. Additionally, the narrative comments relating to the learning theme reflected that students had acquired a greater sensitivity to diversity in people and organizations as a result of the program.

CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND
RECOMMENDATIONS

Adult learning has received considerable attention over the last decade. Educators have strived to articulate not only a framework for adult learning theory but to delineate a practical guide for enhancing the learning process. Each older adult learner represents a complex inner world that is a result of lifelong stimuli, emotion, and experiences in cognitive and cultural realms. Childhood, early life experience, family legacies, adult work, losses and renewals connect and reconnect, often in new ways as we age (Wolf, 1991). As adult educators we must employ methods and provide opportunities to enable the adult learner to reflect on past experience, excel in present circumstances, and project goals and meaningful relationships for the future. Many educational methods can be employed to make the learning environment beneficial and functional for adult learners, but an internal process of change must occur for adults to integrate new meaning and skills into daily living. This process is best identified and explained as perspective transformation. This occurrence can potentially move adults into a reflective thinking process, which is the catalyst for all change and personal growth.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent of perspective transformation experience by adult students among adult students in a non-traditional

undergraduate degree program. The following two research questions were examined.

1. What extent of experienced perspective transformation was determined among adult students in a non-traditional, undergraduate degree completion program?

2. What critical incidents were identified during the educational experience which supported perspective transformation?

The study design was a between methods of quantitative and qualitative research. A convenience sample of 62 adult students who were enrolled and completed the degree program were included as subjects in the research.

Data analysis proceeded in two phases. The first phase was a quantitative analysis used to determine the extent of perspective transformation, as measured by the Personal Orientation Inventory. Pre and post test scores were determined and plotted on a POI profile graph. These scores indicated that an overall increase in perspective transformation was experienced by the adult students. Females were inclined to enter and complete the program at a higher level of self-actualization, except on the self-acceptance scale. Significance test were calculated on all 12 scales of the POI using a paired t-test. There was not a significant difference in pre and post POI scores.

In phase two, a qualitative analysis was used to develop a template approach for content analysis. The text analysis was conducted on a reflections paper submitted by students at the completion of their degree program. A coding

procedure was designed to define major themes emerging from the text.

Additionally, word clusters were identified to describe the degree of response on each of the major themes and sub-clusters. The data revealed that students were actively involved in the perspective transformation process as a result of the educational process. Students summarized key factors in the program which revealed critical incidents related specifically to the program, an improvement in skills, an increase in confidence, the opportunity to self-reflect, and expanded learning and understanding of diversity.

Conclusions

The quantitative phase of the study depicted an overall increase in the level of individual change experienced by the participants. However, none of the 12 scales indicating a shift towards self-actualization were statistically significant. By contradiction, the qualitative phase of the study supported the occurrence of perspective transformation as experienced by the students. The text analysis revealed key components which corresponded to Mezirow's 10-step process of perspective transformation. Students actively participated in critical self-examination with critical assessment of epistemic, sociocultural and psychic assumptions. By working within the cohort group they recognized that one's discontent and the process of transformation are shared and that others have negotiated a similar change. Throughout the program they explored options for new roles, relationships and actions. The data also revealed students had acquired a perceived gain in knowledge and skills necessary for implementing plans of action. An important

phase of transformative learning is the building of competence and self-confidence to consider and implement change. Students pronounced large degrees of increased confidence as a result of the program. It is concluded that the subjects did experience and were actively engaged in the process of perspective transformation as a result of the educational program. The narrative comments support the participants involvement in personal change and growth indicated in Mezirow's 10-step phases of perspective transformation. The major themes and sub-unit clusters which emerged from the text analysis can be directly aligned with factors necessary for facilitating perspective transformation and indicative when an individual is engaged in the transformation process. It is evident that the adult program at Southern Nazarene University is meeting one of the main goals of adult education by providing an environment that is conducive for personal change and growth.

The quantitative analysis did not support the conclusion that perspective transformation was experienced, but the instrumentation could have been invalid in measuring the phenomenon. Mezirow inferred in other studies that standardized tests did not effectively measure changes in locus of control, personal competence, or self-concept within educational programs concerned with fostering transformative learning. Nevertheless, two reasons propelled the utilization of a standard test for this study. One dealt specifically with a triangulation approach to examining transformation. The quality of a study can be strengthened by drawing from various methods of data collection because it is advantageous to a researcher to combine methods to better understand a concept being tested or explored (Creswell, 1994).

Second, this study collaborates Mezirow's findings regarding standardized testing as a measurement for perspective transformation.

All POI scales were indicative of moving to some degree toward a more self-actualized self after completing the educational program. The only scale not reflecting positive change was Time Competency. This data was representative of male and female students. The self-actualizing person appears to live more fully in the here-and-now and ties the past and the future to the present in meaningful continuity. For an individual who is more self-actualized, past and future orientations are depicted as reflecting positive mental health to the extent that the past is used for reflective thought and the future is tied to present goals (Shostrom, 1972). One integral part of the MHR program is the opportunity for students to conduct critical self-reflection and also learn how to set professional and personal goals, such as reflected in the self-actualized person. This fundamental component is ardently integrated into every facet of the program. Curriculum development, theory application, and structured evaluation processes are continually in review for improved methods to precipitate self-analysis. Because of the modularized, accelerated format of the program, this process is executed in a compressed manner. Even when a student has advanced capabilities of processing information, it could be concluded that given a consolidated timeframe examination of an individual's life-span may cause some disorientation to time competence. The educator facilitating the process of perspective transformation must be aware of the necessity of allowing sufficient time intervals when a student is exploring past, present, and future points.

In analyzing the data for gender classifications, it was revealed that on both pre and post test scores female students reflected higher levels of self-actualization on every scale except Self Acceptance. This data parallels with other studies conducted on gender characteristics. Many sociological, psychological, and communication theories support these findings. Preliminary studies have revealed that female students are inclined to do better academically in women only universities where the structural roles of gender are not demonstrated. Therefore, it is concluded that female students are inclined to possess lower levels of self-esteem. It becomes essential for adult educators to provide female students with opportunity for positive affirmation regarding academic abilities and skills in the educational context. Cranton (1994) contended that the educator who fosters transformative learning has a responsibility to provide and arrange for support. She does not imply that educators should necessarily act as a counselor to all learners, but the educator must do everything to ensure that learners have support in negotiating the difficulties they may encounter.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study several recommendations can be made related to perspective transformation among adults. These suggestions are pertinent to an educational context and adult educators. It is recommended that:

1. An evaluation tool be designed to assess perspective transformative among adult learners. Through observations, life histories, case study, interviews,

and critical incident technique research can be conducted on the actual process of perspective transformation and the participants' perceptions of that process. However, the degree to which these experiences change behavior and meaning perspectives cannot be compared. Factors which would need to be considered are different levels of readiness for transformative learning and learning styles.

2. Additional studies correlating variables such as age, self-concept, and years of education to the perspective transformation process should be conducted. Adult educators could more constructively facilitate the perspective transformation process by understanding various profiles of adult learners and how specific characteristics impede or assist the process of transformative learning.

3. This study be replicated with a more defining critical incident technique. Valuable qualitative data was gathered in regards to the perspective transformation experience and process; however, specific incidents which were triggering events within the educational process could not be identified. A rule of thumb in assumption analysis is to use indirect rather than head-on approaches whenever possible. However the generalized questioning did not lend to answering the research question. A far more fruitful approach would be to work from the specific to the general. Learners would be asked to produce detailed accounts of specific events and then move to collaborative, inductive analysis of general elements embedded in these particular descriptions.

4. Several considerations should be regarded when implementing and evaluating adult educational programs. First, cohort groups are instrumental for the

adult student in the learning process. Several benefits result in designing programs in this nontraditional format. The ability to learn with other adult students as well as from them has positive implications for application and synthesizing of information. The individual support and acceptance resulting from the group experience can become therapeutic and also provides a cohesive environment for learning. Accountability to the group becomes a key factor in encouraging students to complete the program and reach personal goals. The sense of "community" created by the cohort group provides the opportunity for individuals to explore new ideas, roles, and attitudes comparably to other adults.

Another recommendation for adult educators considers the design of curriculum. The opportunity for self-assessment and self-reflection should be a motivating factor in selecting activities and exercises utilized throughout program curriculum geared for the adult learner. In general, adults are developmentally positioned to challenge predisposed assumptions and attitudes. Not only are they capable of the process, but it becomes critical for personal growth. Educators should heed every opportunity to integrate reflectivity into course objectives and program goals.

The adult program at Southern Nazarene University should be considered a model for designing and implementing nontraditional degree completion programs for working adults. The teaching methods employed; design of the program; and philosophy of the faculty and staff are attributes to be regarded by other educational institutions planning to implement degree completion programs. The characteristics

exhibited in this particular program, such as cohort group learning, analysis of experiential learning, critical self-reflection, and positive regard for students are key influences that enable the adult educator to promote and facilitate students through the perspective transformation process.

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A
PERSONAL ORIENTATION INVENTORY

POI

PERSONAL ORIENTATION INVENTORY

EVERETT L. SHOSTROM, Ph.D.

DIRECTIONS

This inventory consists of pairs of numbered statements. Read each statement and decide which of the two paired statements most consistently applies to you.

You are to mark your answers on the answer sheet you have. Look at the example of the answer sheet shown at the right. If

the first statement of the pair is TRUE or MOSTLY TRUE as applied to you, blacken between the lines in the column headed "a". (See Example Item 1 at right.) If the second statement of the pair is TRUE or MOSTLY TRUE as applied to you, blacken between the lines in the column headed "b". (See Example Item 2 at right.) If neither statement applies to you, or if they refer to something you don't know about, make no answer on the answer sheet.

Remember to give YOUR OWN opinion of yourself and do not leave any blank spaces if you can avoid it.

In marking your answers on the answer sheet, be sure that the number of the statement agrees with the number on the answer sheet. Make your marks heavy and black. Erase completely any answer you wish to change. Do not make any marks in this booklet.

Remember, try to make some answer to every statement.

Before you begin the inventory, be sure you put your name, your sex, your age, and the other information called for in the space provided on the answer sheet.

Section of Answer Column Correctly Marked	
a	b
1. █	⋮
a	b
2. ⋮	█

NOW OPEN THE BOOKLET AND START WITH QUESTION 1.

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1. a. I am bound by the principle of fairness.
b. I am not absolutely bound by the principle of fairness.
2. a. When a friend does me a favor, I feel that I must return it.
b. When a friend does me a favor, I do not feel that I must return it.
3. a. I feel I must always tell the truth.
b. I do not always tell the truth.
4. a. No matter how hard I try, my feelings are often hurt.
b. If I manage the situation right, I can avoid being hurt.
5. a. I feel that I must strive for perfection in everything that I undertake.
b. I do not feel that I must strive for perfection in everything that I undertake.
6. a. I often make my decisions spontaneously.
b. I seldom make my decisions spontaneously.
7. a. I am afraid to be myself.
b. I am not afraid to be myself.
8. a. I feel obligated when a stranger does me a favor.
b. I do not feel obligated when a stranger does me a favor.
9. a. I feel that I have a right to expect others to do what I want of them.
b. I do not feel that I have a right to expect others to do what I want of them.
10. a. I live by values which are in agreement with others.
b. I live by values which are primarily based on my own feelings.
11. a. I am concerned with self-improvement at all times.
b. I am not concerned with self-improvement at all times.
12. a. I feel guilty when I am selfish.
b. I don't feel guilty when I am selfish.
13. a. I have no objection to getting angry.
b. Anger is something I try to avoid.
14. a. For me, anything is possible if I believe in myself.
b. I have a lot of natural limitations even though I believe in myself.
15. a. I put others' interests before my own.
b. I do not put others' interests before my own.
16. a. I sometimes feel embarrassed by compliments.
b. I am not embarrassed by compliments.
17. a. I believe it is important to accept others as they are.
b. I believe it is important to understand why others are as they are.
18. a. I can put off until tomorrow what I ought to do today.
b. I don't put off until tomorrow what I ought to do today.
19. a. I can give without requiring the other person to appreciate what I give.
b. I have a right to expect the other person to appreciate what I give.
20. a. My moral values are dictated by society.
b. My moral values are self-determined.
21. a. I do what others expect of me.
b. I feel free to not do what others expect of me.
22. a. I accept my weaknesses.
b. I don't accept my weaknesses.
23. a. In order to grow emotionally, it is necessary to know why I act as I do.
b. In order to grow emotionally, it is not necessary to know why I act as I do.
24. a. Sometimes I am cross when I am not feeling well.
b. I am hardly ever cross.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

25. a. It is necessary that others approve of what I do.
b. It is not always necessary that others approve of what I do.
26. a. I am afraid of making mistakes.
b. I am not afraid of making mistakes.
27. a. I trust the decisions I make spontaneously.
b. I do not trust the decisions I make spontaneously.
28. a. My feelings of self-worth depend on how much I accomplish.
b. My feelings of self-worth do not depend on how much I accomplish.
29. a. I fear failure.
b. I don't fear failure.
30. a. My moral values are determined, for the most part, by the thoughts, feelings and decisions of others.
b. My moral values are not determined, for the most part, by the thoughts, feelings and decisions of others.
31. a. It is possible to live life in terms of what I want to do.
b. It is not possible to live life in terms of what I want to do.
32. a. I can cope with the ups and downs of life.
b. I cannot cope with the ups and downs of life.
33. a. I believe in saying what I feel in dealing with others.
b. I do not believe in saying what I feel in dealing with others.
34. a. Children should realize that they do not have the same rights and privileges as adults.
b. It is not important to make an issue of rights and privileges.
35. a. I can "stick my neck out" in my relations with others.
b. I avoid "sticking my neck out" in my relations with others.
36. a. I believe the pursuit of self-interest is opposed to interest in others.
b. I believe the pursuit of self-interest is not opposed to interest in others.
37. a. I find that I have rejected many of the moral values I was taught.
b. I have not rejected any of the moral values I was taught.
38. a. I live in terms of my wants, likes, dislikes and values.
b. I do not live in terms of my wants, likes, dislikes and values.
39. a. I trust my ability to size up a situation.
b. I do not trust my ability to size up a situation.
40. a. I believe I have an innate capacity to cope with life.
b. I do not believe I have an innate capacity to cope with life.
41. a. I must justify my actions in the pursuit of my own interests.
b. I need not justify my actions in the pursuit of my own interests.
42. a. I am bothered by fears of being inadequate.
b. I am not bothered by fears of being inadequate.
43. a. I believe that man is essentially good and can be trusted.
b. I believe that man is essentially evil and cannot be trusted.
44. a. I live by the rules and standards of society.
b. I do not always need to live by the rules and standards of society.
45. a. I am bound by my duties and obligations to others.
b. I am not bound by my duties and obligations to others.
46. a. Reasons are needed to justify my feelings.
b. Reasons are not needed to justify my feelings.

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47. a. There are times when just being silent is the best way I can express my feelings.
b. I find it difficult to express my feelings by just being silent.
48. a. I often feel it necessary to defend my past actions.
b. I do not feel it necessary to defend my past actions.
49. a. I like everyone I know.
b. I do not like everyone I know.
50. a. Criticism threatens my self-esteem.
b. Criticism does not threaten my self-esteem.
51. a. I believe that knowledge of what is right makes people act right.
b. I do not believe that knowledge of what is right necessarily makes people act right.
52. a. I am afraid to be angry at those I love.
b. I feel free to be angry at those I love.
53. a. My basic responsibility is to be aware of my own needs.
b. My basic responsibility is to be aware of others' needs.
54. a. Impressing others is most important.
b. Expressing myself is most important.
55. a. To feel right, I need always to please others.
b. I can feel right without always having to please others.
56. a. I will risk a friendship in order to say or do what I believe is right.
b. I will not risk a friendship just to say or do what is right.
57. a. I feel bound to keep the promises I make.
b. I do not always feel bound to keep the promises I make.
58. a. I must avoid sorrow at all costs.
b. It is not necessary for me to avoid sorrow.
59. a. I strive always to predict what will happen in the future.
b. I do not feel it necessary always to predict what will happen in the future.
60. a. It is important that others accept my point of view.
b. It is not necessary for others to accept my point of view.
61. a. I only feel free to express warm feelings to my friends.
b. I feel free to express both warm and hostile feelings to my friends.
62. a. There are many times when it is more important to express feelings than to carefully evaluate the situation.
b. There are very few times when it is more important to express feelings than to carefully evaluate the situation.
63. a. I welcome criticism as an opportunity for growth.
b. I do not welcome criticism as an opportunity for growth.
64. a. Appearances are all-important.
b. Appearances are not terribly important.
65. a. I hardly ever gossip.
b. I gossip a little at times.
66. a. I feel free to reveal my weaknesses among friends.
b. I do not feel free to reveal my weaknesses among friends.
67. a. I should always assume responsibility for other people's feelings.
b. I need not always assume responsibility for other people's feelings.
68. a. I feel free to be myself and bear the consequences.
b. I do not feel free to be myself and bear the consequences.

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69. a. I already know all I need to know about my feelings.
b. As life goes on, I continue to know more and more about my feelings.
70. a. I hesitate to show my weaknesses among strangers.
b. I do not hesitate to show my weaknesses among strangers.
71. a. I will continue to grow only by setting my sights on a high-level, socially approved goal.
b. I will continue to grow best by being myself.
72. a. I accept inconsistencies within myself.
b. I cannot accept inconsistencies within myself.
73. a. Man is naturally cooperative.
b. Man is naturally antagonistic.
74. a. I don't mind laughing at a dirty joke.
b. I hardly ever laugh at a dirty joke.
75. a. Happiness is a by-product in human relationships.
b. Happiness is an end in human relationships.
76. a. I only feel free to show friendly feelings to strangers.
b. I feel free to show both friendly and unfriendly feelings to strangers.
77. a. I try to be sincere but I sometimes fail.
b. I try to be sincere and I am sincere.
78. a. Self-interest is natural.
b. Self-interest is unnatural.
79. a. A neutral party can measure a happy relationship by observation.
b. A neutral party cannot measure a happy relationship by observation.
80. a. For me, work and play are the same.
b. For me, work and play are opposites.
81. a. Two people will get along best if each concentrates on pleasing the other.
b. Two people can get along best if each person feels free to express himself.
82. a. I have feelings of resentment about things that are past.
b. I do not have feelings of resentment about things that are past.
83. a. I like only masculine men and feminine women.
b. I like men and women who show masculinity as well as femininity.
84. a. I actively attempt to avoid embarrassment whenever I can.
b. I do not actively attempt to avoid embarrassment.
85. a. I blame my parents for a lot of my troubles.
b. I do not blame my parents for my troubles.
86. a. I feel that a person should be silly only at the right time and place.
b. I can be silly when I feel like it.
87. a. People should always repent their wrongdoings.
b. People need not always repent their wrongdoings.
88. a. I worry about the future.
b. I do not worry about the future.
89. a. Kindness and ruthlessness must be opposites.
b. Kindness and ruthlessness need not be opposites.
90. a. I prefer to save good things for future use.
b. I prefer to use good things now.
91. a. People should always control their anger.
b. People should express honestly-felt anger.

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92. a. The truly spiritual man is sometimes sensual.
b. The truly spiritual man is never sensual.
93. a. I am able to express my feelings even when they sometimes result in undesirable consequences.
b. I am unable to express my feelings if they are likely to result in undesirable consequences.
94. a. I am often ashamed of some of the emotions that I feel bubbling up within me.
b. I do not feel ashamed of my emotions.
95. a. I have had mysterious or ecstatic experiences.
b. I have never had mysterious or ecstatic experiences.
96. a. I am orthodoxly religious.
b. I am not orthodoxly religious.
97. a. I am completely free of guilt.
b. I am not free of guilt.
98. a. I have a problem in fusing sex and love.
b. I have no problem in fusing sex and love.
99. a. I enjoy detachment and privacy.
b. I do not enjoy detachment and privacy.
100. a. I feel dedicated to my work.
b. I do not feel dedicated to my work.
101. a. I can express affection regardless of whether it is returned.
b. I cannot express affection unless I am sure it will be returned.
102. a. Living for the future is as important as living for the moment.
b. Only living for the moment is important.
103. a. It is better to be yourself.
b. It is better to be popular.
104. a. Wishing and imagining can be bad.
b. Wishing and imagining are always good.
105. a. I spend more time preparing to live.
b. I spend more time actually living.
106. a. I am loved because I give love.
b. I am loved because I am lovable.
107. a. When I really love myself, everybody will love me.
b. When I really love myself, there will still be those who won't love me.
108. a. I can let other people control me.
b. I can let other people control me if I am sure they will not continue to control me.
109. a. As they are, people sometimes annoy me.
b. As they are, people do not annoy me.
110. a. Living for the future gives my life its primary meaning.
b. Only when living for the future ties into living for the present does my life have meaning.
111. a. I follow diligently the motto, "Don't waste your time."
b. I do not feel bound by the motto, "Don't waste your time."
112. a. What I have been in the past dictates the kind of person I will be.
b. What I have been in the past does not necessarily dictate the kind of person I will be.
113. a. It is important to me how I live in the here and now.
b. It is of little importance to me how I live in the here and now.
114. a. I have had an experience where life seemed just perfect.
b. I have never had an experience where life seemed just perfect.
115. a. Evil is the result of frustration in trying to be good.
b. Evil is an intrinsic part of human nature which fights good.

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116. a. A person can completely change his essential nature.
b. A person can never change his essential nature.
117. a. I am afraid to be tender.
b. I am not afraid to be tender.
118. a. I am assertive and affirming.
b. I am not assertive and affirming.
119. a. Women should be trusting and yielding.
b. Women should not be trusting and yielding.
120. a. I see myself as others see me.
b. I do not see myself as others see me.
121. a. It is a good idea to think about your greatest potential.
b. A person who thinks about his greatest potential gets conceited.
122. a. Men should be assertive and affirming.
b. Men should not be assertive and affirming.
123. a. I am able to risk being myself.
b. I am not able to risk being myself.
124. a. I feel the need to be doing something significant all of the time.
b. I do not feel the need to be doing something significant all of the time.
125. a. I suffer from memories.
b. I do not suffer from memories.
126. a. Men and women must be both yielding and assertive.
b. Men and women must not be both yielding and assertive.
127. a. I like to participate actively in intense discussions.
b. I do not like to participate actively in intense discussions.
128. a. I am self-sufficient.
b. I am not self-sufficient.
129. a. I like to withdraw from others for extended periods of time.
b. I do not like to withdraw from others for extended periods of time.
130. a. I always play fair.
b. Sometimes I cheat a little.
131. a. Sometimes I feel so angry I want to destroy or hurt others.
b. I never feel so angry that I want to destroy or hurt others.
132. a. I feel certain and secure in my relationships with others.
b. I feel uncertain and insecure in my relationships with others.
133. a. I like to withdraw temporarily from others.
b. I do not like to withdraw temporarily from others.
134. a. I can accept my mistakes.
b. I cannot accept my mistakes.
135. a. I find some people who are stupid and uninteresting.
b. I never find any people who are stupid and uninteresting.
136. a. I regret my past.
b. I do not regret my past.
137. a. Being myself is helpful to others.
b. Just being myself is not helpful to others.
138. a. I have had moments of intense happiness when I felt like I was experiencing a kind of ecstasy or bliss.
b. I have not had moments of intense happiness when I felt like I was experiencing a kind of bliss.

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139. a. People have an instinct for evil.
b. People do not have an instinct for evil.
140. a. For me, the future usually seems hopeful.
b. For me, the future often seems hopeless.
141. a. People are both good and evil.
b. People are not both good and evil.
142. a. My past is a stepping stone for the future.
b. My past is a handicap to my future.
143. a. "Killing time" is a problem for me.
b. "Killing time" is not a problem for me.
144. a. For me, past, present and future is in meaningful continuity.
b. For me, the present is an island, unrelated to the past and future.
145. a. My hope for the future depends on having friends.
b. My hope for the future does not depend on having friends.
146. a. I can like people without having to approve of them.
b. I cannot like people unless I also approve of them.
147. a. People are basically good.
b. People are not basically good.
148. a. Honesty is always the best policy.
b. There are times when honesty is not the best policy.
149. a. I can feel comfortable with less than a perfect performance.
b. I feel uncomfortable with anything less than a perfect performance.
150. a. I can overcome any obstacles as long as I believe in myself.
b. I cannot overcome every obstacle even if I believe in myself.

APPENDIX B
SOUTHERN NAZARENE UNIVERSITY
REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

SOUTHERN NAZARENE UNIVERSITY



January 10, 1995

Professor Cathy A. Hutchings
School of Adult Studies

SUBJ: Perspective Transformation Among Adult Students in a
Nontraditional Degree Completion Program

Dear Prof. Hutchings:

I have reviewed the proposal requesting approval for conducting research in the School of Adult Studies and determined that it meets the stipulations required by the review board. You may proceed with the research as proposed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Wayne Murrow".

Wayne Murrow, Ph.D.
Dean, Graduate and Adult Studies

School of Adult Studies

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6729 NW 39th Expressway
Bethany, Oklahoma 73008-9990
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FAX (405) 491-6302

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Tulsa, Oklahoma 74145-7850
ph. (918) 664-4100
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APPENDIX C

OSU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FORM

OKLAHOMA STATE UNIVERSITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW

101

Date: 05-10-95

IRB#: ED-95-086

Proposal Title: PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION AMONG ADULT STUDENTS
INA NONTRADITIONAL DEGREE PROGRAM

Principal Investigator(s): Garry Bice, Cathy A. Hutchings

Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Approval Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approve

APPROVAL STATUS SUBJECT TO REVIEW BY FULL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD AT
NEXT MEETING.

APPROVAL STATUS PERIOD VALID FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR AFTER WHICH A
CONTINUATION OR RENEWAL REQUEST IS REQUIRED TO BE SUBMITTED FOR BOARD
APPROVAL.

ANY MODIFICATIONS TO APPROVED PROJECT MUST ALSO BE SUBMITTED FOR
APPROVAL.

Comments, Modifications/Conditions for Approval or Reasons for Deferral or Disapproval
are as follows:

Signature:



John F. Whybark

Date: May 15, 1995

Chair of Institutional Review Board

VITA

Catherine A. Hutchings

Candidate for Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: PERSPECTIVE TRANSFORMATION AMONG ADULT STUDENTS IN A
NONTRADITIONAL DEGREE COMPLETION PROGRAM

Major Field: Occupational and Adult Education

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Frederick, Oklahoma, August 21, 1955,
the daughter of Larry and Connie Henderson.

Education: Received Bachelor of Arts in Communications from Bethany Nazarene College, Bethany, Oklahoma, in May, 1977; received Masters of Arts in Education from Bethany Nazarene College, Bethany, Oklahoma, in May, 1980; and completed requirements for a Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University in Occupational and Adult Education in December 1996.

Professional Experience: Teacher in public schools, 1977-1979; Professor of Speech Communication and Director of Forensics, Northwest Nazarene College, 1979-1983; Director of Management of Human Resources program at Southern Nazarene University, 1988-Present.