WOMEN RETURNING TO SCHOOL
A STUDY OF THEIR BACKGROUND, MOTIVATIONS, AND EXPERIENCES

by

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ABSTRACT

This study addresses the problems of women returning to post-secondary education after an interruption in their formal training. Increasingly, women are returning to school in the hope of participating more fully in the labour marketplace and in the hope of gaining access to equal employment opportunities. Women require skills, training and other educational opportunities which are generally offered by post-secondary institutions. At this time it is felt that the needs of women learners in post-secondary institutions are not adequately recognized or met and that there exist barriers which inhibit women from access to appropriate learning opportunities. A discrepancy exists between what is needed by the women and what education is offering.

A paucity of Canadian studies pertaining to the educational needs of women exists. The major goal of this study was to contribute to the development of a Canadian data base on women who are returning to post-secondary education. The writer was encouraged by women students, women educators, and adult educators to carry out such a research endeavour. The need for the provision of equal learning and employment opportunities has been recognized. An increasing female population in post-secondary education has been reported and points to the importance of attention in this direction. Therefore, special research consideration to women learners was needed before program requirements could be assessed and the opportunity for change
recognized. The focus of this study, then, became an investigation of a career training program at a local community college; the type of program chosen might represent a typical choice for a returning woman.

A survey questionnaire was used to gather input from a self-selected sample of women enrolled in a social service training program. The design called for a quantitative-descriptive study employing a large number of variables and a small sample of subjects (18). A follow-up and action phase was included in the design whereby consideration of the findings would be given by an administrative group of the college. The prospects for further study were also given consideration in that special emphasis was put on instrument development.

The goals of the study were as follows: to describe the background characteristics, motivations and experiences of the selected sample of returning women students; to determine the associations between variables such as age, marital status and children and the goals and experiences of the women; and to pilot test certain implicit assumptions made about women returning to school. Measuring devices such as proportions and correlations were used.

It was hypothesized that the findings would support prior research findings generated from the United States as well as the perceptions of the key informants to the study. In some instances, this was found; in other instances, new questions were raised. Because the data were not always congruent with our expectations, our previous assumptions were tested and the need for further enquiry was
emphasized. Two salient issues to the women in the survey group were spotlighted; these were the importance of appropriate career and guidance counselling, and the concern about educational training and its relevance to the labour market.
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All the suggestions and the aid received from the various sources here mentioned have been valuable. If they have been poorly acted upon in any instance, the responsibility is mine alone, but, of course, my hope is that the best of which I am capable may continue to be of service to the users of this information.

I will not forget three other individuals who I give special mention: Karin, my most genuine friend; Liz, my colleague who always understood; and Ken, who encouraged me to enjoy life, too.
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to John Crane

who taught me that

"we need to be something more than

the discoverers of our own assumptions".
CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Problem Definition

An increasing number of women today are entering the labour force. Women are doing so for the following reasons: a) women work out of economic necessity to supplement one-income earnings in their families; b) the number of single parent families headed by women has increased; c) women are leaving the labour force for shorter periods of time; and d) women are looking to self-actualization and independence in spheres outside the home.

Women require skills, training and other educational opportunities to enable them to participate more fully in the labour force and to have access to equal employment opportunities. Post-secondary educational institutions are seen as a means to such training. However, it is felt that the needs of women as learners in post-secondary institutions are not adequately recognized or met and that there are barriers which inhibit women from access to appropriate learning opportunities.

A decade of literature has focussed on the educational needs of women in the United States who are returning to post-secondary institutions after an interruption in their education. This population has been referred to as the "returning" woman, as the "re-entry" student or as the "mature" woman student. The post-secondary institutions studied have included universities, community colleges, continuing and adult education programs.
Rationale and Study Purpose

In Canada, we have largely accepted the findings of American studies and assumed that the information they produced can be applied to us. It has only been recently that we have recognized a need for information more specific to our adult women learners.

The major goal of the present study is to contribute to the development of a Canadian data base on mature women seeking to enter the social service workforce via community college training with a particular emphasis on their educational objectives and self-perceived needs and problems.

Several recent reports and studies in British Columbia will be cited which support the need for such a research endeavour. The need for a Canadian data base is pointed out by a British Columbia Ministry of Education report which states, "The challenges, problems, and opportunities of contemporary society are such that people must continue to develop if they are to cope effectively with modern conditions. The pace of change is so rapid in all areas of life that the only satisfactory response is to continue to learn and adapt throughout one's lifespan. Basic to planning for the development of education in British Columbia must be the concept of providing satisfactory opportunities for life-long learning". An adult education system in British Columbia should therefore have as its objectives the provision of equal opportunities for its citizens to continue their learning through their adult years. The report states that particular consideration be given to the special educational needs of women. It goes on to recommend that institutions involved in adult education employ a
wide range of needs-identification techniques at the local level to identify and assess program requirements.

A recent study of non-traditional learning programs for women in British Columbia post-secondary institutions reveals the inadequacy of such learning opportunities. "In most instances these opportunities are ad hoc, peripheral, and fragmented and, therefore, demonstrate a lack of institutional delivery systems conducted by post-secondary institutions with reference to the needs of women". This report recommends the establishment of "Women's Access" programs, which would have the goals of assisting women to access post-secondary institutions and assisting the institutions to modify practices or policies inhibiting women as adult learners. A review of the literature by the authors revealed a paucity of Canadian studies pertaining to the educational needs of women, especially the problems associated with learners returning to school. Included in the recommendations of the report was the conduction of needs assessments of women in the community and in post-secondary institutions.

A recent study conducted in British Columbia of "Office Career" students recommended further inquiry of women students in other career programs to determine whether a similarity exists between individuals in other short programs in traditionally female occupations.

The above mentioned reports resulted in this researcher's interest in giving special research consideration to women's educational needs at the community college level. A community college is defined by the Ministry of Education (B.C.) as "an educational institution that offers academic, technical and vocational courses at the
post-secondary level; and general, adult basic education, and community education programs on a full-time and a part-time basis to adults, during both daytime and evening. A study on the employment of social service graduates emphasized the concern for graduates of community college programs, particularly female graduates.

The Study

This study is designed to gather input from the consumer; the particular consumer group selected are women returning to post-secondary education. It is believed that the channel of research will provide a vehicle for input which is seen as legitimate, non-discriminatory and comfortable for the consumer. The study purpose includes describing the women enrolled in a local community college career training program, namely, a Community Social Service Worker program. A career training program such as this might represent a typical choice for a returning woman. The areas of enquiry are as follows: the background characteristics of the women; their motivations, goals and career plans; and their needs, personal and institutional experiences.

The design called for a quantitative descriptive study employing a large number of variables and a small sample of subjects. The size of the selected group was manageable for in depth study and feasible because of time and financial constraints. As part of the initial planning of the study, a follow-up phase was negotiated, in which an administrative group will give consideration to the implications of
the results for the community college and to the prospects for a series of similar studies. This pilot study could serve: (1) to pinpoint promising areas of enquiry for a larger study; (2) to test measurement methodology, particularly the use of the survey experiment as a device for tapping attitudinal variables; and (3) to secure a research grant.

A review of the literature will follow in the next chapter and will highlight the research findings which are related to the areas of enquiry of this study.
Footnotes


4. M. Hoek, A Descriptive Study of Women Enrolled in the Office Career Programmes at Selected Community Colleges, (University of Victoria, 1979).


CHAPTER 2 - REVIEW OF PRIOR RESEARCH FINDINGS

In reviewing the literature, the writer concentrates on presenting prior research findings rather than on a critical evaluation of the research. The literature which was selected focussed largely on the woman returning to post-secondary education after an interruption in her formal training.

This chapter will begin with a general overview of the problem as presented in the literature and will be followed by a review of the findings in the literature significant to this study's areas of inquiry: the background characteristics of the returning woman; her motivations, goals, and career plans; and her needs, personal and institutional experiences.

The Problem: An Overview

The problems of women returning to post-secondary education have been viewed in both Federal and Provincial perspectives.

Federal sources explicate the economic, educational, and social factors related to the problem. Vickers and Adam (1977) examine the range of institutional factors and policies which reflect the assumption that the traditional divisions of labour between the sexes tend to limit the participation of women in higher education. According to their study, the opportunities for challenging and creative jobs for
women remain limited despite the trend of growing numbers of Canadian women entering the labour force today and desiring to participate more fully in activities outside of the spheres of home and family. Although equality of opportunity in the area of higher education will not by itself result in equal status for Canadian women, it is believed that the direction of educational policy in Canada is a contributing factor and needs to be altered to expand career horizons for women. Vickers and Adam (1977) emphasize that institutions of higher education have done little to adapt themselves to the presence of women and that this is the major barrier to fuller participation by Canadian women in higher education.

Although women's educational level today is generally higher, statistics show the vast majority continue to be streamed into traditional jobs. A report by the National Council of Welfare (1979) shows that the proportion of female workers occupying low-paying clerical, sales, and service jobs has remained unchanged in spite of the dramatic rise of women in the labour force in the last ten years.

Studies also suggest that it is largely because of married women's increased labour force participation that the relative economic position of Canada's middle and low-income families has remained stable instead of getting worse in the last 25 years. (Report by the National Council of Welfare, 1979). Over 45 percent of all British Columbia women over the age of 15 are in the labour force, representing 36.7 percent of all workers (Labour Canada, 1977).

The provincial perspective of the problem is illustrated in a
series of reports produced by the British Columbia Ministry of Education from 1976 to 1979. These reports encourage the development of educational programs which would identify and satisfy women's educational needs.

One report states that the objectives of the provincial adult education system should be, "to provide equal opportunities for all citizens to continue to learn throughout their adult years and to develop their potential in all areas of human interest and activity" (Helping to Develop a Provincial Continuing and Community Education Policy, 1976, p. 8). It recommends that all part-time students in academic, career, technical, and vocational programs at publicly supported educational institutions should be supported by provincial grants up to the same level as that of full-time students. It has been held that the present structure of the workplace and training situation has been designed, by and large, to serve the needs of men (Report of the Commission on Vocational, Technical, and Trades Training in British Columbia, 1977).

In British Columbia, an attempt was made to rank-order priorities by asking college administrators to identify the major goals of their women students. The findings on the study showed that these fell into two specific goal areas: job-related goals, and amenity or quality, of-life goals. As perceived by college administrators, job-related goals are by far the stated primary goals in the British Columbia college system (Carney, 1978). The link between training and employment in the college system is emphasized.

The Zimmerman-Trew study (1979) on programs for women at British
Columbia post-secondary institutions showed that the greater proportion of continuing education offerings were in traditional program areas while the number of non-traditional offerings for women were few, despite the fact that women learners are in the majority. A proposal for women's access centres followed (Ironside, 1979). The centres would function as educational brokers and assist women to plan their educational and labour force participation by providing information and consultation. Such a service would be associated with every post-secondary institution in the province. These programs are seen as necessary to overcome the effects of women's isolation and lack of information about educational opportunities.

The Ironside (1979) paper provides details on the participation of women in community colleges in British Columbia. Sixty-one percent of part-time students were women compared with 45 percent in full-time enrollment (average over all age groups). Women outnumbered men of the same age at thirty. This trend accelerated until age 40 when women represented 69 percent of enrollments. This same report states that in the next 15 years, there will be an increase in the 25 to 44 age group attending post-secondary education and a decline in the 15-24 age group who have been the traditional concern of post-secondary institutions. Other demographic factors influence women's participation in community colleges in British Columbia: women are having an average of 1.8 children in 1977 as compared with 3.8 in 1961; as family size has decreased there has been a growing trend toward the two income earning family; the number of married
women in the female labour force is rapidly increasing (they now constitute 60 percent).

In the earlier 1970's the literature expressed concern for equality of educational opportunity for women. Faure (1972) states that equal opportunity means making certain that each individual receives a suitable education through methods adapted to his particular person. Cross and Valley (1974) suggest that non-traditional programming for women is more of an attitude than a system. This attitude would put the student first and the institution second, would concentrate more on the former's need than the latter's convenience, and de-emphasizes time, space, and even course requirements in favour of competence. It has concern for the learner of any age and circumstance, wanting constant, periodic, or occasional study. Women are asking for the right to pursue higher education on the basis of their interest and achievement instead of their sex (Furniss and Graham, 1974). Women do not have this freedom of choice. This article suggests three reasons: some women are denied this choice by social pressures that define acceptable behaviours for women; some are denied it by their own social conditioning and attitudes regarding women's roles; and some are denied it by institutional practices that are consciously or unconsciously discriminatory. These issues should be the concern of educators.

Although common concerns have been expressed throughout the literature in the 1970's, it is believed that the issues in granting equality of educational opportunity for women of all ages and levels of post-secondary education have not yet been adequately addressed.
Background Characteristics

Reasons for Furthering Education

The literature from the United States describes women who return to post-secondary education in a fairly similar way. Brandenburg (U.S., 1974) describes returning women students as women who return after an interruption in their formal education and points out that they appear to be highly motivated and achieving students. Lenz and Shaevitz (U.S., 1977) describe four groups of women returning to school, which are as follows: 1) a woman returns on a part-time basis when her children are of pre-school age so that she will be ready to return full-time when they reach school age; 2) a woman returns part-time or full-time after her children are in school or have left home to go to work or attend college themselves; 3) a woman working and returning to upgrade her skills or become professionalized; 4) a woman returns to school as a result of separation or divorce, which makes it necessary for her to find a job. Recently divorced women, particularly those with growing children to support, are prime candidates for training that will equip them within a reasonable time for gainful employment. Richards (U.S., 1977) identified three categories of women returning to school: 1) single parents in their 20's and 30's who were practical, confident, and purposeful; 2) married women in their 20's and 30's with children at home, seeking career and personal fulfillment and lacking confidence; and 3) married women in their 30's and 40's with older children, wanting direction and skill redevelopment. Manis and
Mochizuki (U.S., 1972) found women seeking re-entry programs to be uncertain of their abilities and options, experiencing role conflict, low self-worth, dependency, and goallessness. These findings appear incongruent with the Brandenburg report (U.S., 1974) where returning women students are described as highly motivated and achieving. The Brandenburg article is a discussion paper of various other studies, whereas the Manis and Mochizuki paper refers to a study of a specific group of re-entry women. This may account for the different descriptions.

A Canadian study of mature women at the University of Calgary (Ladan and Crooks, 1975) reported background characteristics similar to those in the studies cited above.

**Personal Statistics**

Personal statistics of women returning to post-secondary education after a period of absence have been detailed by Hughson and Foster (Canada, 1975/76), Brandenburg (U.S., 1974), and Astin (U.S., 1976). The average ages of mature women are documented as 34.8 years (Hughson and Foster, Canada, 1975/76), 38 years, ranging from 23 to 53 (Brandenburg, U.S., 1974), and 36 years, ranging from 18 to 75 years. According to these same authors, two-thirds are married, and 15 percent to 27 percent are divorced, widowed or separated. Most married women have children. According to Hughson and Foster (Canada, 1975/76), the woman is a mother of two to three children at home, ranging in age from 3 months to 24 years, with a *(Astin, U.S., 1976)*
mean age of 11 years. Few mature students had children under school age. Astin's sample contained women with pre-school age children (25%) and 50 percent with children over 18 years of age.

**Previous Education**

Typically, women returning to school have had some previous formal education beyond high school. In the Hughson and Foster (Canada, 1975/76) sample, 36 percent had earlier completed a portion of their undergraduate work or achieved their degree. High school graduates comprised the second largest group (32%), while 9 percent had attended junior college and 23 percent checked "other" (meaning attendance at technical schools or other educational institutions). Their academic specialization was generally in occupations having a predominant female membership (i.e. 86% enrolled in Education or Arts). Brandenburg's (U.S., 1974) group had mostly been out of school for at least 15 years. Many of them said they had discontinued their education in order to marry and raise children; a few said it was because of financial need or a lack of interest in school.

**Work Experience**

All had had some type of work experience, paid or volunteer, outside the home during the period they were not attending school. The type of work they engaged in was almost exclusively in areas
traditionally pursued by women - secretarial, bookkeeping, and clerical jobs (Brandenburg, U.S., 1974).

Financing

Sources of financing for their education were as follows (Hughson and Foster, Canada, 1975/76): 42% from husbands, 31% self-supporting and 27% student loans.

British Columbia Study

The British Columbia study (Hoek, 1979) of office careers students provided this description: 80 percent of the students were under 36 years of age; 60 percent under 26 years of age. Seventy-seven percent of the survey group had no education beyond high school. The majority of the group stated work and motherhood as the reasons for not continuing their schooling after high school (marriage and pregnancy 46 percent, work 36 percent). Other reasons given were:"lack of confidence in own ability" (15%), lack of motivation (16%), and lack of funds (13%).

According to the literature, a summary description of the woman returning to school would be: she is married or was married with more
than one child; she has some post-secondary education, generally in a traditional female field; she discontinued her education for child-rearing and marriage; she has some work experience; and the major sources of financing for her education are her spouse, self-support, or student loan. Women returning to school have sometimes been categorized according to their personal characteristics and situations.

Motivations, Goals and Career Plans

Adults in general come for more education voluntarily, with high motivation, a body of experience, and a desire for immediate use of the learning (Verheyden-Hilliard, U.S., 1975). Women's goals and motives—at a Canadian university (Ladan and Crocks, 1975) were found to be based on a search for self-fulfillment and identity. The findings of Astin's study (U.S., 1976) ranked the following as the most important motivations of women returning to school: a desire to become more educated; a desire to achieve independence and a sense of identity; preparation for a better job; to get a degree or certificate; and for counselling and information. The majority of students were attracted by the course and many were strongly encouraged to enroll by friends.

Lenz and Shaevitz (U.S., 1977) divided the motivations of women into psychological and economic. The psychological motivations account for a sizeable number who return to school in their middle and later years, because of a desire to keep up with the rapid changes
and growing complexity of contemporary life. They want stimulus and nourishment, to be part of a community and wish to "make up for lost time".

A study of mature women's achievement needs indicated that mature women who enroll for continuing education are seeking realization of personal needs and self-fulfillment in areas outside the affiliative spheres traditionally thought sufficient concerns for women (Hughson and Foster, Canada, 1975/76). Re-training is their goal, not the simple filling of time suggested in earlier writing. The majority of the mature women surveyed intended to enter the labour force. Particularly influential in her decision to return to school are the attitudes held by her immediate family and, secondly, by her acquaintances.

Letchworth (U.S., 1970) examines motivations of women in light of an identity-integrity model. The motivations of women returning to school are, therefore, relief from boredom; desire for an interesting job; escape from responsibilities; and divorce or marital difficulties. The study sample were women who had been full-time homemakers from middle to upper-middle class families. Eckard (U.S., 1977) confers with Letchworth in that she relates the concerns of mature college students in undergraduate education to developmental tasks commonly associated with adolescence. Women return to the educational system to help resolve identity and integrity needs, particularly middle class women, according to this study.

Eckstrom (U.S., 1972) says working class women are motivated to seek out the opportunities and information available to meet their
particular needs. Glogowski and Lanning (U.S., 1976) stated that mature women attached more importance to economic work values than did younger women students. Ironically, lack of money is a reason frequently given by women for non-participation in adult education (Carp, Peterson, Roelfs, U.S., 1974).

The great majority of mature women students chose careers and areas of study traditionally considered "female" as opposed to neutral or male-dominated disciplines (Baruck, 1972). Although Baruck's study was conducted in the earlier 1970's, educators today would suggest that this still holds true (Astin, Hoek, Zimmerman-Trew). Astin (U.S., 1976) indicated that women who decide to continue their education can be divided into two groups: those whose ultimate goal is a career (employment), and those who take a few courses out of general interest or perhaps to complete a degree.

The results of a study of the employment of social service graduates in Canada (Crane, 1974) indicate that work experience is seen by the majority of students as a significant career choice influence. The community college students' employment plans were, in order of priority, as follows: looking for employment (65.81%); have permanent job (15.81%); further schooling (10.26%); not looking for employment (5.98%); and looking for contract work (1.71%). The non-university programs were graduating substantially more students than could be absorbed into employment in all regions of Canada in 1972. The sex of the respondent contributed independently of other factors to success in finding employment.

Contrasting information on women's attitudes about returning to
school is found in the Lenz and Schaevitz (U.S., 1977) and Helen Astin (U.S., 1976) studies. Lenz and Schaevitz found that feeling guilty about returning to school is a "trap" that women fall into more often than do men. A woman wonders whether she is being selfish to indulge in herself, to deny her family care and attention, and to spend money which could otherwise be used on the family. Three-quarters of Astin's group indicated that having a career in addition to being a wife and mother was important to their self-fulfillment. Self-concept did not appear to be an obstacle. Older as well as younger women were flexible about how old their children should be before she returned to school or work. The Lenz and Schaevitz paper discusses more generally adults returning to school with occasional reference to women. The Astin studies were conducted specifically on women returning to school. This may account for the differences in the citations.

The most relevant Canadian study (Hoek, 1979) found an overwhelming percentage (98%) of the office career students came to college for job training and wanted a career for their own personal fulfillment (83%). The majority of women favoured waiting until their children's school entry before initiating their own re-entry.

In summary, women's motivations for returning to school are self-fulfillment and job training, with the goal of employment or a career outside the home sphere.
Needs, Personal and Institutional Experiences

Needs

Three needs are predominant for the re-entry of mature women into the academic mainstream: enlightened counselling and guidance in designing a life plan to encompass career and family; assistance in seeking financial aid; and flexible procedures and programming (Howard, U.S., 1975). A review of the literature and research demonstrates this summary statement.

A large proportion of the literature draws attention to the counselling needs of women returning to school. Counselling and group support are seen as ways of easing the transition for women returning to college (Furniss-Cross, U.S., 1974). Verheyden-Hilliard (U.S., 1975) emphasize that the advisor or counsellor of adults cannot separate the academic from the personal. He deals with: fear; individual reactions to stress; self-analysis, search for identity, and role problems; goal, educational and vocational planning; financial aids; personal adjustment problems; social problems; and employment assistance. The proposed Women's Access Centres (Ironside, Canada, 1979) in British Columbia, would assist women to locate and utilize educational opportunities and would provide women with their support and counselling needs.

A recent article in a Canadian newspaper (The Other Press, 1979) stresses the need to alleviate the financial barriers mature women face in continuing a post-secondary education. Statistics show that one in five women in the labour force are single, widowed, divorced, or separated and that 45.3 percent of all female headed families are earning less
than $5000/year. This low average income necessitates financial aid for any woman who wants to continue her education and establish a better life for herself and her family.

The needs of women returning to school according to American studies will be reviewed. The Verheyden-Hilliard (1975) article examines the critical factors affecting re-entry women's access to jobs and their chances of obtaining and retaining work at a level appropriate to their capabilities. It emphasizes that the mature woman often requires financial assistance for two reasons: to defray the cost of training and education, and to support and care for her family while she prepares herself for advancement. Women without sufficient education or training lose the ability to benefit from or even remain in the work force. Tittle and Denker (1977) reiterate this. De Wolfe and Lunneborg (1972) found financing to be a serious problem of the mature undergraduate students attending the University of Washington. The purpose of the Perrone, Wolleat, Lee and Davis (1977) study was to identify the counselling needs of adult students enrolled in vocational-technical schools. Women of all ages were significantly more concerned than the men over having enough money to pay for their education and more concerned about facing unemployment. The Glogowski and Lanning (1977) study reported the same.

In the social services, female employment rates were found to be substantially lower than those of males in every region surveyed in Canada (Crane, 1974). There was a difference of as much as 32 percentage points in rate of employment by sex in British Columbia.

Krakauer (Canada, 1976) recommends that all persons who have been
out of full-time education for two or more years and who have reached a minimum age of 18 years, should have the right to conditional admission to post-secondary education without having to meet formal requirements (p. 44). The Waters study (1971) on admission procedures for adult applicants in 58 colleges and universities in five United States, indicated concern for irrelevant admission requirements for the adult applicant. It recommended special admissions' personnel, procedures, information, and testing for adult applicants.

Personal and Institutional Experiences

The literature of the later 1960's concerned itself with age and sex discrimination practices as they applied to women returning to school. Ekstrom's (U.S., 1972) well-known study categorizes the barriers encountered by women as institutional, situational and dispositional. The institutional factors serving to exclude women from participation in post-secondary education included admissions practices, financial aid practices, institutional regulations, types of curriculum and services adopted, and faculty and staff attitudes. Situational barriers included family responsibilities, financial need, and societal pressures. The dispositional barriers that prevent women from continuing education included their fear of failure, attitude toward intellectual activity, role preference, ambivalence about educational goals, level of aspiration, passivity, dependence, and feelings of inferiority.

Many hypotheses allude to a conflict between the roles that society
expects females to fulfill and the personal goals or aspirations of females. Letchworth (U.S., 1970) highlights these problems for women returning to school: scheduling academic and home responsibilities; management of feelings of guilt, shame, and isolation. Tomlinson-Keasey (U.S., 1974) hypothesized that if the more general role expectations of a society influence an individual's motivation, then one can expect fear of success or role anxiety to result. The data from this study suggested that the "fear of success" data in the literature be viewed with caution since it focussed on an extreme group, the single college coed. Mature students face a different set of obstacles than do their younger counterparts (Hughson and Foster, U.S., 1975/76). Younger students apparently have fewer problems as compared to the mature group who mentioned the lack of child-care facilities, time stresses and time bargaining for home duties and study, and the pervasive lack of self-assurance (also reported by Manis and Mochizuki, U.S., 1972). A study of married, middle-class women re-entering school after being primarily wives and mothers for a number of years (Brooks, U.S., 1976), said there were three issues particularly salient for these women: low self-confidence, time-management, and role conflict. Lenz and Shaevitz (U.S., 1977) report the "guilt-edged complex", the guilt feelings that assail women when they begin seeking directions of their own, feelings which emanate from deep-rooted cultural patterns.

For Astin's (U.S., 1976) sample of women, the three problems most frequently cited as very important during participation in the continuing education program were all program-related: time of day
classes were offered; location, distance and transportation; and cost. The personal variables cited as problems included: lack of time; job responsibilities; family obligations; lack of specific skills/abilities; lack of direction/purpose; lack of self-confidence; guilt about money and guilt about neglect of children. The frequency of the problems cited varied with age, marital status and race.

Canadian studies generally supported the Astin (U.S., 1976) findings and will now be reviewed. A study of a random sample of mature Albertan women as compared with a group of first year university students (Ladan and Crooks, 1975), reported the following as obstacles: lack of funding; lack of child-care facilities; need for time bargaining between study and family needs; and lack of confidence. Krakauer (1976) studied women not being reached by existing programs of the college in Ontario. She found the most important considerations of students in taking courses: were location of course, time, child-care, finances and transportation (in order of priority). Over 83% wanted part-time study opportunities. Krakauer identifies the lack of flexible programming policies and job re-entry programs as serious barriers, as well as counselling and guidance services, especially for the 31-45 year old woman. In the study of the demand for part-time learning in Ontario (Waniewicz, 1976), the "learner" group of women experienced these obstacles: too busy with many responsibilities; lack of money; difficulty getting out of the house; and distance and transportation. Level of previous education, age, place of residence and marital status affected the ranking of problems.

Janet Willis (1977) conducted a cross-Canada study of institutions
offering educational programs for women (colleges, universities, YM/YWCA's, selected women's centres). She refers to the fact that despite a proliferation of programs geared to women, there has been little change in the provision of education services necessary for a woman to access learning in the first place. She surveyed women educators who reported the following as barriers in a woman's opportunity to learn: her own self-concept; lack of services to help with the re-entry process; course offerings at inconvenient times and places; child-care; and lack of income. Willis suggests that the largest barrier within the educational system is inadequate career counselling.

The British Columbia office careers students (Hoek, 1979) worried about examinations, time conflicts, teaching methods and assignments in relation to the program in which they were enrolled. One-half of the group were afraid they would not get jobs at the end of their training. One-third reported no concern over financing their education. Although the women valued a career as part of their own self-fulfillment, their priorities and goals appeared diffuse or in flux. The mature women were particularly over-loaded and under-supported.

The changes that might be recommended in response to the above description of the personal and institutional experiences of women returning to school have been recorded by Astin (U.S., 1976). Frequently recommended program changes were: provide child-care; financial aid; low tuition; reach and enroll a wider population; increase publicity; evaluate courses and services and follow-up on
participants; move locations; allow greater variety and choice of
time for courses; make counselling responsive to individual needs
and differences; provide better occupational and educational infor-
mation; provide or improve job placement; and increase funding and
staffing of the program.

One might conclude that women returning to school have
counselling needs because the institutions they attend do not pro-
vide them with help in re-entering; they have financial needs and
time-management problems because of their situations; and they
experience low self-esteem and role-conflict. The experiences and
concerns of women vary with factors such as age, marital status,
education, and other background characteristics.

A review of prior research findings as they were presented in
the literature was conducted in this chapter. The literature
originated largely from the United States but also included all
Canadian-based literature which was seen to be relevant. The lit-
erature was initially used to select problems for further enquiry
and later to test previous findings on this study sample. The organ-
ization of the review was determined by the questions selected for
this study and will be consistent with the presentation of the
findings in Chapter 4.
CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

Theoretical Framework

Women who are returning to school after an interruption in their educational training have needs which may not be understood or adequately met by post-secondary institutions. It has been held that these institutions serve the interests of the traditional student population and not the increasing population of women who are returning to post-secondary education. The barriers that exist for women are reflected in admissions practices, scheduling, support services, counselling services and financial aid. Once women's needs have been identified, program requirements can be assessed and the needs, as well as opportunities, for change can be recognized. The study attempts to meet the goal of clarifying needs by gathering information from the consumer - in this instance, the "returning" women students enrolled in a career training program. Research will be used as the channel for input on their perceptions and opinions; the self-perceived needs of the women will be spot­lighted and the implications of the findings explored with the college.

The American studies and the one Canadian study conducted in British Columbia on the experiences of the students in Office Careers programs (Hoek, 1979), serve as a reference point for this study. These studies have outlined the background characteristics, the motivations and career goals of women, and their personal and institutional experiences.
To offer a description of a group of women returning to school and to assess the needs of this group, will provide beginning knowledge about the educational needs of women. Because the "returning" woman student is often interested or directed to specific career training and skill development in preparation for employment or re-employment, a career training program is important to look at as the educational institution. This type of program is offered at the community college level in British Columbia. Women often begin their new career goals at this level with the possibility of transfer later to a university-based program or as an expedient means to entry into the labour force.

Specific Goals of this Study

The goals of the study are:

1) To describe: the background characteristics of the selected sample of returning women; their motivations, goals, and career plans; and their needs, personal, and institutional experiences.

2) To determine selected associations between variables and to explore ways of accounting for these associations. This study explores the following as the dependent variables: personal and career goals; reasons for furthering education; problems experienced during participation in the program; and personal problems experienced during participation in the program. These dependent variables are examined against the following independent variables: age; marital status; number of children at home or responsible
for caring for; ages of these children; length of time since last enrolled in an academic or vocational course; overall satisfaction with the Community Social Service Worker program; and plans upon completion of the program.

It is hypothesized that a woman's age, marital status, number of children and so forth will affect her goals and the problems she experiences during her participation in the program, and her reasons for furthering her education.

3) To devise and pilot test a measure of the effects of implicit assumptions about homemaking responsibilities of women and about sex roles on women's judgements on: a) the decision to prepare for a career, and b) the appropriateness of assertive behaviour towards instructors on the part of women students.

Hypotheses

It is hypothesized that the findings will support the perceptions of the key informants to this study and the findings of other studies as reviewed in the literature. The key informants described the typical returning woman student as having a family, with children in school; having some work experience but not full-time, long-term employment; having taken some courses or workshops previously; and having verbal but not practical support from her family.

She is motivated to enter this program because she is "people-oriented" and sees it as an extension of mothering, nurturing, and her
life experiences. In this regard, she will feel some confidence. She may have been directed, or she didn't see alternatives, to this career program. She likely has a strong self-fulfillment motive.

The key informants suggested that the group would be heterogenous in terms of life experience, educational background, personal situation and motivation. Women would be motivated to return to school for one of two reasons: 1) to fulfill self-esteem needs, or 2) to meet specific career goals.

According to the key informants, a majority of the women will experience financial, child-care, and academic problems. They will have needs for better career counselling and exploration and personal support. They will feel need for some academic upgrading and flexibility in timetabling. They will be overwhelmed by the requirements of the program. Some women would have preferred part-time study. Since the college is a commuter college, there will be geographical and physical concerns. Most women will be discouraged by job prospects and will have employment search needs.

The hypotheses which lead to the use and design of vignettes were: 1) that women's career decisions are affected by their marital status and the age of their children; and 2) that the sex of an instructor or authority figure will affect a woman's assertiveness in communicating her learning needs.
Assumptions Underlying the Study

This study makes some value assumptions and assumptions of fact which are now stated. The group of women under study constitute "returning" women students. These women want work opportunities and, therefore, need training through education. These women are a "non-traditional" student clientele in the education institutions they attend because the institutions have been designed to serve the needs of a younger student population and the needs of men. There exists a discrepancy between what is needed by the women and what education can offer at this point in time. This fact places women in a disadvantaged position, socially and economically, and affects their participation in the labour force. Education is one variable to women's long-term work objectives and, in this sense, post-secondary institutions have a responsibility in the provision of equal learning opportunities for women to ensure that their training needs are met.

Level of Research Design

The research design chosen for this study is the quantitative-descriptive design (Tripodi, 1969). A quantitative-descriptive design seeks quantitative descriptions among specified variables obtained through the use of measuring devices, such as correlations and proportions, to describe the relationships amongst the variables.

The survey questionnaire was used to gather the demographic characteristics and the opinions and attitudes of the survey group.
It had a clear descriptive purpose and also aimed to explore and develop tentative explanations of the influence of various factors upon some phenomenon. The analogue experiment design with the use of vignettes formed a portion of the survey to search for similarities and comparisons in the responses. This design is usually applied to an intact group, as in this study, and when the study is directed at specific local policy issues. This type of format can maximize the information yield from a small non-random sample. A stochastic or probabilistic model is set up in the vignettes where one manipulates in a randomized fashion the format of the questions. Randomization is achieved in the questionnaire, not in the population. The key independent variables in the study are manipulated by creating variations of them in hypothetical situations for which the respondents make decisions.

The pre-conditions to this design are that there must be some measure of the concepts involved so there is a low level of inference on the part of the researcher and that the options given to the respondents present a realistic choice to them.

**Data Collection Design**

The original sources of information in the survey design phase were the literature and a selected group of individuals who were seen as knowledgeable on the problem and who would, thus, serve as key informants. In order for the researcher to achieve a low
level of inference, the key informant interviews were conducted to find out what was salient to them and what their experience with the problem had been. Five key informant interviews were conducted. They resulted in an affirmation of the importance of the problem, recommendations on needed data and a suitable study population, and perceptions of the population.

The survey group of women students enrolled in a Community Social Service Worker program was the major source of data. The survey of the women who left the program resulted in a return of four out of the nine possible responses. The data from this group were not used in the statistical analysis.

The questionnaire schedule was derived from the Astin (1976) and Hoek (1979) studies, and adapted to and made appropriate for the program and college under study. The co-ordinator and an instructor in the program provided consultation based on their specific needs for information. In addition, the key informants highlighted the areas to cover in such a survey. A questionnaire was designed incorporating these suggestions.

Considerable time and effort were given to the development of a suitable instrument that would: a) fit this particular study; b) allow for the exploration of a large number of variables that were seen to be significant; and c) allow for the instrument to be tested as a possible basis for a larger study. Developing the instrument, therefore, involved in-depth key informant interviews initially and continuous consultation and revision until it was believed ready for a pre-test. This process took approximately
three months.

A pre-test was conducted approximately two weeks prior to the anticipated survey date. The purpose of the pre-test was to check the adequacy of the questionnaire, the ease of handling it, the efficiency of its layout and its clarity. The distribution of the vignettes in the pre-test was identical to the method planned for the actual survey and therefore served as a pilot run. In addition, the realism of the vignettes was being tested in the pre-test.

The pre-test group consisted of four women who had graduated from the program in the previous year. They suggested minor changes to the wording and understanding of the questions. The predicted time on the administration of the instrument of 45 minutes was accurate. The usefulness of the survey was emphasized by the pre-test group.

A final version of the survey instrument was devised. The format of the questions in most instances entailed a list of items from which the respondent would choose the relevant item or items. The list of items was generally assumed to be exhaustive, although an "other" category was provided. The open-ended questions in the questionnaire included: recommending program changes, specifying satisfactions with the program, and making any additional comments. The topics covered in the questionnaire were: the respondent's career interests and experiences as a student in the program; background information; assessment of the program based on the respondent's experience and the respondent's recommendations; plans upon completion
of the program; and lastly, the vignettes.

The questionnaire consisted of 105 items requiring separate replies, which included two vignettes with four versions to each vignette. Each respondent received one version of each vignette. A covering letter was attached, explaining the purpose of the study, eliciting the co-operation of the class, and ensuring the confidentiality of the responses.

The survey with the intact group was conducted in early April. Apart from being the most feasible time to conduct the survey, it was also believed to be suitable in terms of the nature of the input from the students. Being near the end of the final semester, the students would provide information based on close to the year's experience in the program. The survey date would fall prior to the time of pressures of examinations and assignment completions. In-class time was arranged for by the program co-ordinator. It took between 45 minutes to one hour to complete the questionnaire.

The writer gave the group a brief introduction to the questionnaire and its format, and again assured the respondents of their voluntary participation in the survey and of their confidentiality. The program co-ordinator was not present during the administration of the questionnaire. The writer was present to answer questions of interpretation only and to create a condition in which there would not be interaction between the respondents so they could make independent judgements and so there would be no contamination.

The group of women who left the program were required to complete their questionnaires independently. The writer contacted
each person initially by telephone, describing the purpose, background, the voluntary and confidential nature of the study. They were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it anonymously by mail. Although the method of data collection from this group was different from the intact group, it was assumed the variables of "meeting" with the group and the "sight" of the writer were not great since the introductions to the study were the same.

**Sampling Design**

Two sampling designs were used: 1) a self-selected sample into a particular program over a period of time; and 2) a random sampling of the vignettes as described in the data analysis section.

The self-selected sample was composed of a group of women who had returned to post-secondary education. This group was enrolled in a Community Social Service Worker program at a British Columbia community college. The group numbered 18.

Although this group formed the entire population in this particular program, we refer to them as a sample. The justification is that we are making inferences to a statistical population, which is hypothetical of statistical outcomes. The reader is referred to Solomon Diamond\(^2\) for further reference.

Because the study is exploratory in a new area of enquiry, a small sample with a large number of variables was employed. Rather than attempt to replicate the study at another college, it was decided to invest an equivalent time and effort in negotiating an
"action" phase of the study at the college where it took place. This took the form of a plan for consideration of the findings and development of an implementive plan following completion of the study. The anticipated stages are: a) report the major findings of the study to the college administration, program personnel and the survey group; b) draw up implications of the findings for the college specifically and, on a broader level, for further research and educational policy; and c) report these to the appropriate government department and other education institutions.

A second group was surveyed, which was composed of the women who had left this program at the end of the first semester. This group numbered nine, or one-third of the original group accepted into the program.

The program is a one-year certificate social service career training program which prepares students for employment in a variety of community settings: social, recreational, educational and health. It is offered primarily for full-time study because it entails three class days per week and two field-work days per week. As a para-professional or volunteer, the graduate may function as a community-development worker or provide direct services to clients. Enrollment in the course is limited. Acceptance into the program is dependent upon the suitability of the applicant to the program in areas such as: personal, experience and skill.

The host college of this program is a commuter college, situated in a suburban middle-class community in the Lower Mainland area of British Columbia.
Design of Data Analysis

Three types of data analyses were employed in the study: frequency counts, measures of association for rank order and categorical data, and two-way analysis of variance.

Frequency Data

With a sample of 18, frequency counts were used. The frequency data were used to demonstrate measures of consensus and variance amongst responses. Each response option provided was treated as a separate item. Each item, then, became dichotomous (yes, no). The minimum consensus range was set at 9-14 (out of a total of 18) and the maximum consensus range at 14-18. The direction of the responses is considered. The survey of the group of women who left the program will not be used in a statistical way because of the low response rate.

Choice of Level of Significance

Measures of association were calculated for pairs of independent and dependent variables. The findings are presented at .15 and .05 levels of significance. Data presented at .15 level of significance were adopted for three main reasons: a) with a sample size of 18, the statistical power is quite small; b) the problem of Type II error at .05 level of significance would be much higher than Type I error; since we regard them of equal importance we can reduce Type II error to the neighbourhood of Type I error by using .15 level of significance; and c) this seemed to be a reasonable compromise.
between the conventional level of .05 and the rather extreme value, .30, which is sometimes recommended.

Therefore, any finding whose significance level is equal to or less than .15 is considered significant in this study. We also distinguish those findings significant beyond .05 level, indicating simply a greater degree of significance. Critical values were determined for a number of 17, the range in number of responses making no visible difference to the values. See appendix A for calculation of critical values of rho.

Two-Way Analysis of Variance

Vignettes were created and added to the main questionnaire. In creating the vignettes one sets up problems or hypothetical situations for which the respondents make decisions; one must then decide on suitable experimental variations of the problems which reflect the hidden factor and/or variable controls (holding constant some variable in the vignettes).

In Vignette I, we tested the effects of marital status and the age of children on a woman's decision to return to school. Four variations were decided upon: single parent, married, pre-school children and school-age children. The respondents were to give their opinions on the woman's decision to return to school (constant factor) and on the importance of these factors: concern for the opinion of the family; self-fulfillment in a career; spending less time with the family; and "other" factors the respondent might consider important.
In Vignette II, we tested the effects of the sex of the instructor on a woman's decision to confront the instructor about completing an assignment. Four variations were set up: female instructor, male instructor, confront the instructor, and comply with the instructor. The respondents were asked to give their opinion on the woman's decision (to confront or comply) and on the importance of the following factors: fulfilling learning interests; agreeing with the instructor; communicating needs and interests; and "other" factors the respondent considers important.

The four variations or versions of each of the two vignettes were randomly assigned to the questionnaires. Two-way analysis of variance was calculated for the vignettes. This type of analysis enables one to measure the effect of more than one independent variable on the dependent variable and also to test whether there is an interaction effect. In this instance, a comparison of responses to different versions of each vignette was made to establish the impact of the test variables.

The mathematical model for two-way analysis of variance states that any particular observation deviates from the grand mean, and this deviation is composed of a column variance, row variance, interaction variance, and error variance (see appendix B for calculation of formulae). In summary, we tested the differences in means; that is, are there significant row and column effects and are there interactions between them? We tested whether the relationship between the variables found in the sample was greater than could be expected in the population by chance alone by calculating
F-ratios.

A fixed-effects model was appropriate for the vignettes. Inferences made in this model can be made only about the particular treatment administered and not about any other kinds of treatments that might have been administered. Since one-quarter of the group would receive one version of each of Vignettes I and II, a small sample only would be compared.
Footnotes:


Appendix A - Chapter 3:

Calculation of Critical Values of RHO
For the .02, .05, .10, .15 Levels of Significance

\[ t = \rho \sqrt{\frac{n - 2}{1 - \rho^2}} \]

\[ t^2 = \rho^2 \left( \frac{n - 2}{1 - \rho^2} \right) = \rho^2 \left( \frac{15}{1 - \rho^2} \right) \]

\[ \frac{t^2}{15} = \frac{\rho^2}{1 - \rho^2} = \frac{15}{t^2} = \frac{1 - \rho^2}{\rho^2} = \frac{1}{\rho^2} - 1 \]

\[ \frac{1}{\rho^2} = \frac{15}{t^2} + 1 \]

\[ = \frac{15 + t^2}{t^2} \]

\[ \rho^2 = \frac{t^2}{15 + t^2} \]

\[ \rho = \frac{t}{\sqrt{15 + t^2}} \]  
(derived from M.G. Kendall, Rank Correlation Methods, 1948).

If \( n = 17 \), the critical values are:

\[ p: \; .02 \; .05 \; .10 \; .15 \]

\[ \rho: \; .56 \; .48 \; .40 \; .36 \]
Appendix B - Chapter 3

Calculation: Formulae for F-Ratios for Vignettes
(Source: Winer, 1962, p. 283)

Let \( A_1 = \Sigma \text{Col. 1} \) i.e. \( \Sigma a's + \Sigma c's \)

Let \( A_2 = \Sigma \text{Col. 2} \) i.e. \( \Sigma b's + \Sigma d's \)

Then \( \text{SSa} = \frac{(A_1 - A_2)^2}{4n} = \frac{(A_1 - A_2)^2}{16} \)

(sum of squares)

Let \( B_1 = \Sigma \text{row 1} \) i.e. \( \Sigma a's + \Sigma b's \)

Let \( B_2 = \Sigma \text{row 2} \) \( \Sigma c's + \Sigma d's \)

Then \( \text{SSa} = \frac{(B_1 - B_2)^2}{4n} = \frac{(B_1 - B_2)^2}{16} \)

(sum of squares)

Sample Layout of Data for
Two-way ANOVA
Vignette I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Col. 1</th>
<th>Col. 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Row 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>version a</td>
<td>version b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>single pre-school children</td>
<td>married pre-school children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a</td>
<td>b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>version c</td>
<td>version d</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>single school-age children</td>
<td>married school-age children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c</td>
<td>d</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \text{SST} = \frac{\left(\text{Sum of all 16 scores}\right)^2 - \left(\text{Sum of Scores}\right)^2}{16} \]

\[ \text{SSA}_{a,b} = \frac{\left\{(\Sigma a + \Sigma d) - (\Sigma b + \Sigma c)\right\}}{16} \]
SSE = SST - SSa - SSb - SSab
(sum of error)

MSE = \frac{SSE}{3} (df. = 3)
(mean sum of error)

F-Ratios

F (column effect) = \frac{SSa}{MSE}, d.f. = 1,3, critical value 10.1 at .05 level of significance.

F (row effect) = \frac{SSb}{MSE}, d.f. = 1,3, critical value 10.1 at .05 level of significance.

F (interaction effect) = \frac{SSab}{MSE}, d.f. = 1,3, critical value 10.1 at .05 level of significance.
RESULTS

Problems in Implementing the Research Design

In selecting a survey population, time and cost considerations become paramount. The writer needed to tap an easy-to-reach population and the most feasible approach, therefore, was to survey a self-selected group. There is limited generalizability from such a survey and the data can only represent the subjects directly under examination. The fact that the group is intact may be a variable in itself; other mature women students may not be in an intact group.

The particular sample group chosen expressed ambivalence at the outset about the research. They expressed skepticism, a low level of trust, and a fear of being evaluated. The frustrations they were experiencing in the program were transferred to the research endeavour. The students were attaching blame to the program about its value in the labour market. The researcher's need to develop a working relationship with the program personnel and the student group became a delicate task because of the climate that existed between students and instructors. In the end, every student participated in the survey.

The attempt at surveying the group of 9 students who left the
program after the first semester resulted in a low response rate (4 out of 9). The response rate of this group was so small as to preclude any statistical inference based on comparison.

Spearman's Rho was the statistical test applied to all rank-order correlations of independent and dependent variables with the exception of marital status. Freeman's theta was used in this instance because of the presence of both ordinal and nominal data.

Descriptive Data on Sample

One hundred and five responses under 25 topical areas were initially tabulated in raw frequencies and percentages. Two questions in the questionnaire were open-ended; the data from these will be presented in conjunction with the quantitative data. Presentation of the data will be organized under three major headings: background characteristics; motivations, goals, and career plans; and needs, personal and institutional experiences.

Background Characteristics

A description of the background characteristics of the survey group of students enrolled in a Community Social Service Worker program will include information on: age, marital status; number of children at home and ages of these children; education; work experience; and financing of education.

The age distribution of the respondents ranges from under age
20 to age 60, indicating a large age distribution. More than half of the class (N = 10) falls in the 26-40 age range.

Table 1. Age Distribution of Respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26 - 30</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 - 35</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 - 40</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41 - 45</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 - 50</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 55</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 - 60</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A large majority of the women in the survey either were married or are married (14 or 77.8%).

Table 2. Marital Status of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Separated/Divorced</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widowed</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Just over half (10) of the respondents have children at home or children for whom they are responsible. The remainder of the respondents (8) have no children at home.

Table 3. Number of Children at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Children</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>none</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The age categories of these children range from 4 to over 23 years. The greater concentration of children falls in the 7 to 12 category (6) and the 13 to 17 category (5). Only 2 respondents have children in the pre-school age range, 4-6.

Table 4. Age Categories of Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ages</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no children</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>birth - 3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 - 6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 17</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 - 22</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23 and over</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Several women continued their education after high school. The respondents who did not continue their education gave the following reasons: wanted to work (6), funds not available (1), lack of interest (1), and marriage or pregnancy (1).

Table 5. Reasons for Discontinuing Education After High School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>does not apply to me</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wanted to work</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>funds not available</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of interest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marriage, pregnancy</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illness (self or family)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents not in favour</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>questioned my ability</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of motivation</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

At some point the large majority of the group had taken post-secondary education: technical or business (1), some college or university (9), and graduate and/or professional training (5).
Table 6. Highest Level of Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 10 or less</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12 equivalent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 12 completion</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical or business school</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some college or university training</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's degree</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate and/or professional training</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The fields of study for those women who have post-secondary education are: liberal arts (4), commerce/business (1), nursing (3), social work (1), mathematics (1), physiotherapy (1), accounting (1) and civil engineering (1).

Table 7. Fields of Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>does not apply to me</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts and/or Social Sciences</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commerce, Business</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dentistry</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued ...
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Economics</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Library Science</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Work</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The length of time since the last enrollment in an academic or vocational course for more than half the group (10) was less than one year ago. Five women were last enrolled between 1 and 5 years ago, and the remainder of the group (3) between 16 and 30 years ago.

The number of years of paid employment of the respondents varied from less than one year to 29 years. Close to half of the respondents (8) worked between 2 and 5 years; six respondents worked between 6 and 13 years.
Table 8. Total Number of Years of Paid Employment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Years</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>less than one year</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>five</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>six</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eight</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ten</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twelve</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thirteen</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twenty</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>twenty-nine</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The total years of volunteer work ranged from less than one year to 15 years. One person did volunteer work for less than a year, seven persons from 2 to 4 years, and six persons from 7 to 15 years. Three respondents did not reply.

Immediately prior to entering the present program of study, 5 of the women were employed. The others (13) were not employed for reasons such as: lack of interest, no financial need, inadequate training or lack of job opportunities, raising children and home responsibilities.

Half of the class were financed by their spouses to return to school. Another major source of financing was savings and/or investments.
### Table 9. Sources of Financing Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sources</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N = 18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>employer subsidy</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spouse</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>loan</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scholarship or bursary</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>savings/investments</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>part-time job</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insurance, pension, alimony</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada Employment allowance</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>income and/or social assistance</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In summary, the background characteristics of the survey group are as follows: there is a clustering of women in the 26 to 40 age range; the majority of them have been or are presently married; half of the respondents have children, half do not; the women with children generally enrolled in this program when their children were of school age.

The large majority of women did not continue their formal education after high school. Most of the respondents have post-secondary training in fields that are traditionally female. The major sources of financing for their education are their spouses and savings or investments.
Motivations, Goals, and Career Plans

The questions in the questionnaire leading to a description of the motivations, goals and career plans of the survey sample cover the following topics: personal and career objectives; reasons for furthering education; reasons for enrolling in the Community Social Service Worker program; satisfaction with the decision to enroll in this program; influences to enter the program; plans upon completion of the program; awareness of jobs of interest; number of job inquiries made; and desired job characteristics.

The respondents were asked to select from a list of items the three most important personal and career objectives when coming to the college. The items most frequently chosen were: to assess my own potential to develop further competencies (11); to prepare for a job (9); and to explore options for self-fulfillment and personal identity (8). No one chose the objective of receiving counselling and information about career opportunities. "Other" objectives given were: to examine the social work field, and to seek a compromise to enrolling in a degree program.

Table 10. Personal and Career Objectives of Respondents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Objectives</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>to prepare for a job</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to qualify for better job/promotion</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to become more educated</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to receive diploma, certificate etc.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued ...
There was high consensus on "attraction to the program" as a reason or factor for furthering their education. A second item in the minimum consensus range (9-14) was personal growth and fulfillment. "Other" reasons for furthering their education were to explore the field of social work and to learn more about another career opportunity.

Table 11. Reasons for Furthering Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reasons</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dissatisfied with job</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fewer home responsibilities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>illness or death in family</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>availability of funds</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>economic need to work</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family or marital changes</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attracted to this program</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued ...
The respondents were asked to briefly list and describe their most important reasons for enrolling in the Community Social Service Worker program as a choice in furthering their education. Their responses fall into three major areas which are personal, career-oriented, and interest in the human service field. Amongst the personal reasons given were statements about testing personal ability; learning to think and concentrate; learning more about interpersonal relationships; clarifying own identity; and wanting personal growth. A good number of the women felt that the program would aid them in a decision on which area of social work to pursue or would serve as a stepping stone in their career. This program was seen as convenient in its length and as an insurance policy regarding employment. The program was in many instances chosen because of the respondent's specific interest in working with people and in the human service field, or in a very specific capacity in the field.

When asked how satisfied they were with their decision to enroll in this program, the large majority of the respondents were "very satisfied" to "satisfied". Only 2 women felt dissatisfied. The most frequently listed reasons for this satisfaction were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>encouragement/recommendation from others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>personal growth/fulfillment</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>61.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moved close to college</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
increased self-confidence and personal growth, increased knowledge and clarification of career interests.

Table 12. Respondents' Satisfaction with Decision to Enroll in Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very satisfied</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>satisfied</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dissatisfied</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very dissatisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Respondents were asked to select from a given list all items applicable as influences in their decision to enter the program. The two items of highest consensus were: direct work or volunteer experience in the social work field and career or guidance counselling. The remainder of the items listed were generally given low priority. "Other" influences were: experience outside the field of social work; related courses; and the respondent's own decision.

Table 13. Influences to Enter Program

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Influences</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>husband</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>parents</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person in field of social work</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person outside field of social work</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Continued ...
Six respondents have plans to seek employment and six to enroll in further studies upon completion of the program. At the time of the survey, only one respondent had a job to go to. A few were seeking or had part-time work and one person was unsure of her plans upon completion.

### Table 14: Respondents' Plans Upon Completion

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plans</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>have job to go to</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>have no job but am seeking one</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enroll in further studies</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>looking for short-term contract work</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>no intent to seek permanent job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows the frequency and percentage of respondents' plans upon completion of the program.
When asked if they were currently aware of any jobs of interest to them, most respondents stated a definite "yes" or "yes, potentially" (13). Two persons were not aware of any interesting jobs and two were aware of jobs which would be interesting for only a short period of time. Thirteen of the group have made some job inquiries to date; five had not made any.

The job characteristics to which the respondents attached greatest importance were: job satisfaction (nature of work); opportunities for personal growth; and freedom to innovate and experiment. "Other" characteristics included flexibility and independence and source of income.

Table 15. Job Characteristics Desired

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>does not apply</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job security</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job satisfaction</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>77.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promotional opportunities</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunities for personal growth</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>55.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>freedom to innovate/experiment</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opportunity for supervision/training</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>convenient location</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In summary, the career objectives of greatest importance to the respondents when returning to college were to assess their potential to develop further competencies, to prepare for a job and to explore options for self-fulfillment and personal identity. An attraction to this specific program was given as the most important reason for furthering their education. The respondents were generally satisfied with their decision to enroll in this particular program. The plans of the respondents upon completion of the program are either to seek employment or to enroll in further studies.

Needs, Personal and Institutional Experiences

The third and final major area of description of the survey population is related to their needs, personal and institutional experiences. This section covers questions on the following: problems during participation in the program; personal problems during this time; the suitability of qualifications/training to career interests; satisfactions with the program; and recommended program changes.

The respondents were asked to select from a given list, all items which were very important problems during their participation in the program. The items of highest consensus were concern about work overload in the program (13), and uncertainties about the value of the program in the marketplace (12). Approximately one-third of the group chose costs, length of classes and lack of time as problems they experienced. Those respondents choosing the "other" category stated the following problems: peer conformity and pressure;
lack of time to obtain specific skills; lack of expertise on the part of instructors in some subject areas; and insufficient attention from instructors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lack of preparatory education</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>costs</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>location of campus, distance, transportation</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time of day classes offered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>length of classes</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>negative experiences with instructor(s)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job responsibilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of skills/abilities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of time</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>courses don't respond to interests</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of confidence in handling program</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>value of program in marketplace</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>66.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preferred part-time studies</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of support from classmates</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of support from instructors</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concern about work overload</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concern about work underload</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concern about rigidity of program</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concern about flexibility of program</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
From a personal standpoint, the problems experienced during participation in the program were varied. Those items which received most attention were: family and home maintenance responsibilities (17); lack of physical energy or physical endurance (16); emotional stress (8); medical reasons, such as personal illness, family illness, pregnancy (6); and worry about getting a job (6). The two items of least priority were concern about personal care of children and child-care arrangements. No one item fell into the high consensus range (14-18). "Other" personal problems experienced were: medical and lack of group cohesiveness.

Table 17. Personal Problems Experienced

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problems</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lack of self-confidence</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>27.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of personal direction/purpose</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>insufficient support from family</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>family and home responsibilities</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>38.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of physical energy/endurance</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emotional stress</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>44.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anxiety about money</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concern about personal care of children</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>concern about child-care arrangements</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medical reasons</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>worry about getting a job</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>33.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The large majority of the survey group indicated they were "somewhat satisfied" with the Community Social Service Worker program.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfaction</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very satisfied</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>somewhat satisfied</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>72.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutral</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>somewhat dissatisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very dissatisfied</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A further indication of satisfaction with the program is the positive response to the question on suitability of qualifications and training to the respondents' interests. Thirteen persons felt their qualifications and training were suitable and provided the following reasons: they learned about specific areas of social work; the program served as a good stepping-stone for further study or training and confirmed their interest in the human service field. The remainder of the respondents (5) clearly recognized the need for more advanced training to reach their career goals.

In an open-ended question, the respondents were asked to describe the aspects of the program and college with which they were most satisfied. Satisfaction was expressed with the content and instruction of specific courses. The respondents felt they had developed skills in the areas of counselling and written and oral
communication. The field placement experience was positive. Some women expressed that they felt the college had shown flexibility and helpfulness to mature students but they did not articulate how this had been done. In addition, the instructors were seen as showing understanding, genuine interest, openness and flexibility.

The respondents were asked to specify the changes they would recommend on the basis of their experience at the college and in the program. Close to half of the group recommended better counselling services and fewer assignments as changes that needed to be made. The physical setting in which the particular program was housed was of concern to the respondents, as well as having access to other services that the college provided. A good deal of concern was expressed for the status of a graduate from this program within the social service profession, particularly as it relates to the labour market. The students recommend a two-year diploma credit program, which would qualify them for university transfer. Other recommendations made by a smaller portion of the group were: more skilled instructors, block field placements, and more comprehensive screening of applicants into the program.

**Findings on Study Questions and Hypotheses**

Rank-order correlations (Spearman's Rho) were applied to measure the association between certain independent and dependent variables of the study. The data are presented in the form of rank-correlation matrices. All computed values are shown with asterisks highlighting
those values significant at the .15 or greater level and the .05 or greater level. Each independent variable and its association with the test dependent variable will be discussed separately.

The dependent variables are abbreviated in the tables and, therefore, will be described at this time. "Objectives" refer to personal and career objectives. The questionnaire items related to objectives are:

- to prepare for a job;
- to qualify for a better job and/or promotion;
- to become more educated;
- to receive a diploma, certificate, citation or college credit;
- to receive counselling and information about career opportunities;
- to make contact with other people;
- to develop skills to become more effective in personal family relationships and/or social relationships;
- to explore options for self-fulfillment and personal identity;
- to assess own potential to develop further competencies; and other.

Items listed under "problems" which were important to the respondent during participation in the program were:

- lack of preparatory education for the program;
- costs;
- location of campus, distance, transportation;
- time of day classes are offered
- length of classes;
- negative experiences with instructor(s);
job responsibilities;
lack of specific skills and abilities;
lack of time;
courses do not quite respond to interests;
lack of confidence to successfully handle the program;
uncertainties about the value of the program in the marketplace;
would have preferred part-time studies;
lack of support from classmates;
lack of support from instructors;
concern about work overload in the program;
concern about work underload in the program;
concern about rigidity of program;
concern about flexibility of program; and
other.
The question on "personal" problems important during participation in the program includes these items of choice:
lack of self-confidence;
lack of personal direction and/or purpose;
insufficient support from family;
family and home maintenance responsibilities;
lack of physical energy or physical endurance;
emotional stress;
anxiety about money;
concern about personal care of children;
concern about child-care arrangements;
medical reasons: personal illness, family illness, pregnancy;
worry about getting a job; and other.

The following reasons or factors for furthering "education" were listed:

- dissatisfied with job;
- fewer home responsibilities;
- illness or death in the family;
- availability of funds;
- economic need to work;
- family or marital changes;
- attracted to this program;
- encouragement and/or recommendation from others;
- personal growth and fulfillment;
- moved close to college; and other.

The independent variables under consideration are: length of time since last enrolled in course; respondent's age; marital status; number of children; program satisfaction; future plans; and ages of children. These are all ordinal measures.

"Length of time since last enrolled in a course" was correlated with the following dependent variables: "objectives", "problems", and "personal" (see Tables 19 and 20). The length of time since a respondent was last enrolled in an academic or vocational course is not significantly related to the personal and career objectives of the respondent. The problems experienced during participation in the program which are significantly related to the length of time
the respondent was last enrolled are: lack of time, and concern about work overload. The only personal problem experienced during participation in the program which is directly related to length of time since enrolled in a course is anxiety about money. The respondents most recently enrolled in a course were more inclined to use the "other" category.

The age of the respondent was correlated with "objectives", "problems", "personal" and "education" (see Tables 19 and 20). There is a negative or inverse association between the age of the respondent and:

a) the career objective of qualifying for a better job and/or promotion;
b) problems in the program related to costs, time of day classes are offered, job responsibilities; lacking confidence in successfully handling the program, and concern about rigidity in the program;
c) personal problems experienced which are lack of personal direction and/or purpose, emotional stress, anxiety about money, and worry about getting a job;
d) the reason for furthering education being dissatisfaction with job.

A positive correlation exists between the age of the respondent and furthering her education due to fewer home responsibilities. Older respondents in all four dependent variable categories had a tendency to make additional comments and choose the "other" category. The marital status of the respondent (see Tables 19 and 20) was not significantly related to her having particular personal
and career objectives. The statistical tests showed a positive relationship between marital status and experiencing the following problems: costs, and lack of confidence in handling the program. A married woman is more likely to experience personal problems such as lack of self-confidence, lack of personal direction and purpose, and worry about getting a job. She would also have an economic need to work and would be furthering her education for personal growth and fulfillment.

The number of children a woman has was correlated with "objectives", "problems", "personal", and "education" (see Tables 19 and 20). A significant relationship was found between "number of children" and the objective of wanting to qualify for a better job and/or promotion. Those women with no children or fewer children experienced problems such as location of campus, distance and transportation; lack of confidence in successfully handling the program; and preferring part-time studies. The women with children tended to experience lack of support from instructors. The women with no children or fewer children selected these items as personal problems: lack of self-confidence and lack of personal direction or purpose. A significant relationship exists between concern about personal care of children and child-care arrangements and number of children. A woman with children is most likely to be furthering her education out of an economic need to work.

The respondents' overall satisfaction with the program was correlated with "objectives", "problems", "personal" and "education" (see Tables 19 and 20). The respondents most likely to be
satisfied with the program had the objective of "exploring options for self-fulfillment and personal identity". The respondents having the following problems were less satisfied with the program: negative experiences with the instructors, feeling lack of support from instructors, and being concerned about work underload. No personal problems showed a statistically significant relationship with program satisfaction. The satisfaction with the program tended to be less if the respondents were furthering their education for reasons such as: "fewer home responsibilities" or "encouragement from others" to enter the program. A person furthering her education for personal growth and fulfillment will express more satisfaction with the program. Those persons less satisfied with the program tended to state "other" reasons for furthering their education.

A woman's plans upon completion of the program were correlated with personal and career objectives but did not achieve a level of statistical significance (see Table 19).

The various age categories of the children of the respondents were examined against these dependent variables: "objectives", "problems", "personal", and "education". (see Tables 21 and 22). If a respondent had no children, she was less likely to have "becoming more educated" as a career objective. She would experience problems related to: location of campus, distance and transportation; lack of confidence in successfully handling the program; uncertainties about the value of the program in the marketplace; and would have preferred part-time studies. She would have expressed lack of self-confidence and lack of personal direction and purpose as personal
problems experienced during her participation in the program. Her reasons for furthering her education would be availability of funds, and personal growth and fulfillment.

No respondents had children in the birth to age 3 category. Those respondents with children in the age 4 to 6 category had the personal objective of making contact with other people. No "problem" correlated significantly with having children in the age 4 to 6 category. Personal problems significant to the women with this age child at home are: family and home maintenance responsibilities, and concern about personal care of children and child-care arrangements. These women are furthering their education for the reason of an economic need to work and not for personal growth and fulfillment.

The typical woman with a 7-12 year old child at home wants to become more educated and isn't interested in assessing her potential to develop further competencies. She does not lack confidence in her ability to handle the program. She is not likely to be experiencing lack of self-confidence and insufficient support from her family. She has an economic need to work and is not furthering her education for personal growth and fulfillment.

Personal and career objectives are not significantly related to having children aged between 13 and 17. A woman with this age of child expresses lack of preparatory education in the program as a problem. Lack of self-confidence and lack of physical energy or endurance are negatively related to having children in this age category. She was encouraged by others to further her education and
is not seeking personal growth and fulfillment.

The respondents with children aged 18-22 have the personal and career objective of assessing their own potential to develop further competencies. Specific problems experienced during participation in the program were not significantly related to having children in this age category. A woman with children these ages is furthering her education for the reason of having fewer home responsibilities.

The only variable achieving a level of significance with having children in the 23 or older range is the personal problem of insufficient support from family.
Table 19. Rank-Correlation Matrix (Spearman's Rho)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Last Respondents Enrolled</th>
<th>Respondents Age</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>No. of children</th>
<th>Program Satisfaction</th>
<th>Future Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>OBJECTIVES</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>job</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.16</td>
<td>-.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>promotion</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>-.40*</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.31</td>
<td>-.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education</td>
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<td>.30</td>
<td>.35</td>
<td>.46*</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.26</td>
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<td>diploma</td>
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<td>-.27</td>
<td>.27</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.18</td>
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<td>.26</td>
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<td>-.08</td>
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<td>skills</td>
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<td>-.14</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>-.13</td>
</tr>
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<td>-.09</td>
<td>.33</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>-.46*</td>
<td>.05</td>
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<td>potential</td>
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<td>.04</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>-.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
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<td>.40*</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.12</td>
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<td>PROBLEMS</td>
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<td>.10</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
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<td>costs</td>
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<td>-.37*</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.19</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-.30</td>
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<td>.20</td>
<td>-.36*</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.26</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>job</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.38*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<td>.33</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<tr>
<td>time</td>
<td>.36*</td>
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<td>.28</td>
<td>-.33</td>
<td>.12</td>
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<tr>
<td>courses</td>
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<td>.20</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>confidence</td>
<td>-.11</td>
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<td>.41*2</td>
<td>-.55**</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>.41</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.19</td>
<td></td>
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<td>.20</td>
<td>-.36*</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>.01</td>
<td>.17</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.08</td>
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<td>support</td>
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<td>.21</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.48**</td>
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<td>overload</td>
<td>.53**</td>
<td>.24</td>
<td>.30</td>
<td>-.20</td>
<td>.25</td>
<td></td>
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<td>underload</td>
<td>-.21</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.62**</td>
<td></td>
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<td>rigidity</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>-.38*</td>
<td>.14</td>
<td>-.25</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td></td>
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<td>flexibility</td>
<td>-0.</td>
<td>-0.</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-0.</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.39*</td>
<td>.43</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.09</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at .15 level
**significant at .05 level

1 statistical test used was Freeman's Coefficient of Determination.

2 Not significant at .05 level; no significance test was possible to determine if significant at .15 level because the expected frequency requirements necessary to calculate theta were not satisfied.
Table 20. Rank-Correlation Matrix (Spearman's Rho)

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Last Respondents Enrolled</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>No. of children</th>
<th>Program Satisfaction</th>
<th>Future Plans</th>
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<td>-.21</td>
<td>.43*2</td>
<td>-.64**</td>
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<td>-.60**</td>
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<td>-.46*</td>
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<td>.24</td>
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<td>-.21</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td>-.23</td>
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<td>.29</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>-.19</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-.42*</td>
<td>.28</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.31</td>
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<td>.07</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.38*</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<td>.07</td>
<td>.10</td>
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<td>.04</td>
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<td>-.23</td>
<td>-.25</td>
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<td>.49*4</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.11</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.45*</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td></td>
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<td>EDUCATION</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>job</td>
<td>-.42*</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.09</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>.33</td>
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<td>.06</td>
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<td>.45**</td>
<td>.41*</td>
<td>-.21</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td>.30</td>
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<td>-.25</td>
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<td>-.11</td>
<td>-.07</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>-.04</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>-.39*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>-.81</td>
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<td>-0.</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other</td>
<td>.45*</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>.43*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*significant at .15 level
**significant at .05 level
1Statistical test used was Freeman's Coefficient of Determination
2Not significant at .05 level; no significance test was possible to determine if significant at .15 level because the expected frequency requirements necessary to calculate theta were not satisfied.
3Ibid.
4Ibid.
Table 21. Rank-Correlation Matrix (Spearman's Rho) of Career Objectives, Problems Experienced, Personal Problems, Education with Age of Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OBJECTIVES</th>
<th>No. children</th>
<th>Birth -3</th>
<th>4-6</th>
<th>7-12</th>
<th>13-17</th>
<th>18-22</th>
<th>23 &amp; over</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>job</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-0.0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>-0.12</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
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<tr>
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<td>0.06</td>
<td>-0.24</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>education</td>
<td>-0.40*</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.50**</td>
<td>-0.18</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>0.34</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>diploma</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>-0.22</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>-0.11</td>
<td>-0.28</td>
<td>-0.15</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>counselling</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>-0.16</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contacts</td>
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<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
<td>0.36**</td>
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<td>potential</td>
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<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>-0.09</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

PROBLEMS

| education   | -0.22| -0.09| -0.17| 0.39**| -0.11| -0.06|           |
| costs       | -0.16| -0.13| 0.35  | 0.     | -0.17|       |           |
| location    | 0.40*| -0.13| -0.25| -0.22| -0.16| -0.09|           |
| classes     | 0.27| -0.09| -0.17| -0.15| -0.11| -0.06|           |
| length      | 0.20| -0.28| -0.32| 0.01  | 0.25  | -0.19|           |
| instructor  | 0.20| -0.16| 0.     | -0.28| -0.20| -0.11|           |
| job         | 0.27| -0.09| -0.17| -0.15| -0.11| -0.06|           |
| skills      | 0.27| -0.09| -0.17| -0.15| -0.11| -0.06|           |
| time        | -0.25| -0.28| 0.16  | 0.01  | 0.25  | 0.30  |           |
| courses     | 0.20| -0.16| -0.32| 0.06  | 0.20  | -0.11|           |
| confidence  | 0.60**| -0.19| -0.38*| -0.33| -0.24| -0.13|           |
| marketplace | 0.40*| -0.13| -0.25| -0.35| 0.     | 0.17  |           |
| part-time   | 0.40*| -0.13| -0.25| -0.22| -0.16| -0.09|           |
| classmates  | 0.20| -0.32| 0.     | -0.28| -0.20| -0.11|           |
| support     | -0.32| -0.13| 0.13  | 0.18  | 0.32  | 0.09  |           |
| overload    | 0.06| -0.18| -0.35| -0.17| 0.28  | 0.15  |           |
| underload   | -0.22| -0.09| 0.34  | -0.15| -0.11| -0.06|           |
| rigidity    | 0.27| -0.09| -0.19| -0.15| -0.11| -0.04|           |
| flexibility | -0.02| -0.02| -0.02| -0.02| -0.02| -0.02|           |
| other       | 0.08| -0.25| -0.25| 0.09  | 0.32  |       |           |

*significant at .15 level
**significant at .05 level
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal Problems</th>
<th>No. children</th>
<th>Birth -3</th>
<th>4-6</th>
<th>7-12</th>
<th>13-17</th>
<th>18-22</th>
<th>23 &amp; over</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>self-confidence</td>
<td>.69**</td>
<td>-.22</td>
<td>-.44**</td>
<td>-.38*</td>
<td>-.28</td>
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<td>direction</td>
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<td>-.16</td>
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<td>-.38*</td>
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<td>.45*</td>
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<td>-.17</td>
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<td>-.32</td>
<td>.06</td>
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<td>-.13</td>
<td></td>
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<td>-.19</td>
<td>-.27</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.13</td>
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<td>encouragement</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>-.52**</td>
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<td>-.20</td>
<td>-.11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

* significant at .15 level
**significant at .05 level
Vignettes

The results from the vignettes were subjected to two-way analysis of variance. In Vignette I, the effects of marital status and age of children (independent variables) on the following dependent variables were measured: a woman's decision to return to school; her concern for the opinion of her family in making this decision; the importance of self-fulfillment in a career; spending less time with her family; and any "other" factors the respondent might consider important (see Appendix A and Table 23).

In Vignette II, the effects of the sex of an authority figure and the conformity of the student on the following dependent variables were measured: the decision of the woman to confront or comply with the authority figure; the importance of fulfilling her learning interests; of agreeing with the authority figure and of communicating her needs and interests; and "other" factors the respondent might consider important (see Appendix B and Table 24).

F-ratios were calculated for each of the dependent and independent variables and their interaction. The relationships between these variables was not sufficiently strong to reach a level of significance in any instance in the two vignettes.
Table 23. Two-Way Analysis of Variance

Vignette I: Marital Status and Age of Children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>F-RATIOS</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opinion on Jeanette's decision to return to school</td>
<td>marital status: .0006</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>age of children: .0052</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interactions: .0006</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Concern for opinion of family</td>
<td>marital status: .0666</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>age of children: .0005</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interactions: .0016</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self-fulfillment in a career</td>
<td>marital status: .0019</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>age of children: .0001</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interactions: 0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Spending less time with family</td>
<td>marital status: .0021</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>age of children: .0021</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interactions: .0049</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other factors for consideration</td>
<td>marital status: .0025</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>age of children: .0650</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interactions: .0025</td>
<td>n.s.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A to Chapter 4

Vignette I
Jeanette is a single parent with two children. Both are of pre-school age. Jeanette has recently become interested in a career in nursing and has enrolled in a two-year program at a community college. She wants to gain more self-fulfillment from a career.

This decision to return to school has brought about changes for the whole family. Although Jeanette has had some mixed feelings about spending less time with her family, she believes she made the right decision in terms of her own future.

1. In your opinion, is Jeanette's decision to go to school [Check (✓) one]:
   - commendable
   - acceptable
   - neutral
   - unacceptable
   - totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Jeanette's decision? [Check (✓) one for each factor]:
   - Concern for the opinion of her family:
     - very important
     - important
     - neutral
     - relatively important
     - totally unimportant
   - Self-fulfillment in a career
     - very important
     - important
     - neutral
     - relatively important
     - totally unimportant
   - Spending less time with her family:
     - very important
     - important
     - neutral
     - relatively important
     - totally unimportant
   - Other (specify)
     - very important
     - important
     - neutral
     - relatively important
     - totally unimportant
Jeanette is a married woman with two children. Both are of pre-school age. Jeanette has recently become interested in a career in nursing and has enrolled in a two-year program at a community college. She wants to gain more self-fulfillment from a career.

This decision to return to school has brought about changes for the whole family. Although Jeanette has had some mixed feelings about spending less time with her family, she believes she made the right decision in terms of her own future.

1. In your opinion, is Jeanette's decision to go to school [Check (✓) one]:
   ___ commendable
   ___ acceptable
   ___ neutral
   ___ unacceptable
   ___ totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Jeanette's decision? [Check (✓) one for each factor]:
   i) Concern for the opinion of her family:
      ___ very important
      ___ important
      ___ neutral
      ___ relatively important
      ___ totally unimportant
   ii) Self-fulfillment in a career
      ___ very important
      ___ important
      ___ neutral
      ___ relatively important
      ___ totally unimportant
   iii) Spending less time with her family:
      ___ very important
      ___ important
      ___ neutral
      ___ relatively important
      ___ totally unimportant
   iv) Other (specify) ________________________________
      ___ very important
      ___ important
      ___ neutral
      ___ relatively important
      ___ totally unimportant
Jeanette is a single parent with two children. Both are at school. Jeanette has recently become interested in a career in nursing and has enrolled in a two-year program at a community college. She wants to gain more self-fulfillment from a career.

This decision to return to school has brought about changes for the whole family. Although Jeanette has had some mixed feelings about spending less time with her family, she believes she made the right decision in terms of her own future.

1. In your opinion, is Jeanette's decision to go to school [Check (✓) one]:
   - commendable
   - acceptable
   - neutral
   - unacceptable
   - totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Jeanette's decision? [Check (✓) one for each factor]:
   i). Concern for the opinion of her family:
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   ii) Self-fulfillment in a career
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   iii) Spending less time with her family:
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   iv) Other (specify)
Jeanette is a married woman with two children. Both are at school. Jeanette has recently become interested in a career in nursing and has enrolled in a two-year program at a community college. She wants to gain more self-fulfillment from a career.

This decision to return to school has brought about changes for the whole family. Although Jeanette has had some mixed feelings about spending less time with her family, she believes she made the right decision in terms of her own future.

1. In your opinion, is Jeanette's decision to go to school [Check (√) one]:
   - commendable
   - acceptable
   - neutral
   - unacceptable
   - totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Jeanette's decision? [Check (√) one for each factor]:
   i) Concern for the opinion of her family:
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   ii) Self-fulfillment in a career
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   iii) Spending less time with her family:
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   iv) Other (specify) ________________________________
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
Table 24. Two-Way Analysis of Variance

Vignette II: Sex of Instructor and Conformity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ITEM</th>
<th>F-RATIOS</th>
<th>SIGNIFICANCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Opinion on Nadine's decision sex of instructor:</td>
<td>.0011 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>conformity: .0220 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>interactions: .0005 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Fulfilling her learning sex of instructor:</td>
<td>.0012 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interests conformity: .0011 n.s.</td>
<td>interactions: .0025 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Agreeing with instructor sex of instructor:</td>
<td>.0013 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conformity: .0013 n.s.</td>
<td>interactions: 0 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Communicating needs and interests sex of instructor:</td>
<td>.0115 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conformity: .0005 n.s.</td>
<td>interactions: .0005 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Other factors for consideration sex of instructor:</td>
<td>.0090 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>conformity: .0090 n.s.</td>
<td>interactions: .0290 n.s.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B to Chapter 4

Vignette II
Nadine is a woman attending a one year career training program at a local community college. During her course of studies at the college, the instructor, Joan Brown, presented the class with an assignment which held little interest for Nadine. The situation presented a dilemma for Nadine because she liked the instructor and was eager to maintain her good marks; at the same time, the assignment held little interest for her. Nadine's decision was to confront the instructor and try to negotiate an alternative.

I. In your opinion, is Nadine's decision [Check (✓) one]
   ______ commendable
   ______ acceptable
   ______ neutral
   ______ unacceptable
   ______ totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Nadine's decision? [Check (✓) one for each factor]
   i) fulfilling her learning interests
      ______ very important
      ______ important
      ______ neutral
      ______ relatively important
      ______ totally unimportant
   ii) agreeing with instructor to maintain good marks and relationship with instructor
       ______ very important
       ______ important
       ______ neutral
       ______ relatively important
       ______ totally unimportant
   iii) communicating her needs and interests
        ______ very important
        ______ important
        ______ neutral
        ______ relatively important
        ______ totally unimportant
   iv) other (specify)
       ______ very important
       ______ important
       ______ neutral
       ______ relatively important
       ______ totally unimportant
Nadine is a woman attending a one year career training program at a local community college. During her course of studies at the college, the instructor, John Brown, presented the class with an assignment which held little interest for Nadine. The situation presented a dilemma for Nadine because she liked the instructor and was eager to maintain her good marks; at the same time, the assignment held little interest for her. Nadine's decision was to confront the instructor and try to negotiate an alternative.

1. In your opinion, is Nadine's decision [Check (✓) one]
   ______ commendable
   ______ acceptable
   ______ neutral
   ______ unacceptable
   ______ totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Nadine's decision? [Check (✓) one for each factor]
   i) fulfilling her learning interests
      ______ very important
      ______ important
      ______ neutral
      ______ relatively important
      ______ totally unimportant
   ii) agreeing with instructor to maintain good marks and relationship with instructor
      ______ very important
      ______ important
      ______ neutral
      ______ relatively important
      ______ totally unimportant
   iii) communicating her needs and interests
      ______ very important
      ______ important
      ______ neutral
      ______ relatively important
      ______ totally unimportant
   iv) other (specify) __________________________
      ______ very important
      ______ important
      ______ neutral
      ______ relatively important
      ______ totally unimportant
Nadine is a woman attending a one year career training program at a local community college. During her course of studies at the college, the instructor, Joan Brown, presented the class with an assignment which held little interest for Nadine. The situation presented a dilemma for Nadine because she liked the instructor and was eager to maintain her good marks; at the same time, the assignment held little interest for her. Nadine felt compelled to yield to the instructor and, therefore, completed the assignment as presented.

1. In your opinion, is Nadine's decision [Check (✓) one]
   _____ commendable
   _____ acceptable
   _____ neutral
   _____ unacceptable
   _____ totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Nadine's decision? [Check (✓) one for each factor]
   i) fulfilling her learning interests
      _____ very important
      _____ important
      _____ neutral
      _____ relatively important
      _____ totally unimportant
   ii) agreeing with instructor to maintain good marks and relationship with instructor
      _____ very important
      _____ important
      _____ neutral
      _____ relatively important
      _____ totally unimportant
   iii) communicating her needs and interests
      _____ very important
      _____ important
      _____ neutral
      _____ relatively important
      _____ totally unimportant
   iv) other (specify) ____________________________
      _____ very important
      _____ important
      _____ neutral
      _____ relatively important
      _____ totally unimportant
Nadine is a woman attending a one year career training program at a local community college. During her course of studies at the college, the instructor, John Brown, presented the class with an assignment which held little interest for Nadine. The situation presented a dilemma for Nadine because she liked the instructor and was eager to maintain her good marks; at the same time, the assignment held little interest for her. Nadine felt compelled to yield to the instructor and, therefore, completed the assignment as presented.

1. In your opinion, is Nadine's decision [Check (✓) one]
   - commendable
   - acceptable
   - neutral
   - unacceptable
   - totally unacceptable

2. In your opinion, how important do you feel the following factors should have been in Nadine's decision? [Check (✓) one for each factor]
   i) fulfilling her learning interests
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   ii) agreeing with instructor to maintain good marks and relationship with instructor
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   iii) communicating her needs and interests
      - very important
      - important
      - neutral
      - relatively important
      - totally unimportant
   iv) other (specify)
DISCUSSION

The discussion of the findings will be organized according to the three major areas of description of the study, namely, the background characteristics, motivations, and experiences of the study group of women returning to school. It will highlight the significant findings and the hypotheses which were sustained and those which were not. In addition, comparisons will be made with the information drawn from the literature and the key informant interviews and the study findings.

Background Characteristics

The descriptive data on age and marital status are congruent with what was anticipated. Some interaction between these two variables was detected when they were correlated with the dependent variables of the study. A two-way cross-tabulation of marital status and age was made to determine the predictability of marital status from knowledge of a person's age. There is approximately a fifty-five percent gain over chance in predicting marital status from age. This indicates a moderate positive association. No exact test of significance is available but the relationship looks sufficiently strong to mean the results on the relationship of marital status to other variables are to some degree a reflection of the age of the respondents. The reader is cautioned that this is a possibility only since this possibility cannot be tested with so little data. Further research could test these hypotheses by using a three-way analysis holding age constant for marital status and the dependent variables.
In the results of the study, the younger respondents and the married women identified similar problems, personally and academically. These are two possible examples of the predictability factor.

In general, the data on age and marital status tend to reflect practical rather than ideological differences. This will be demonstrated at various points in the discussion. The writer would hypothesize the possibility of movement away from some traditional assumptions that have been held about the age and marital status factors in the experiences of a woman returning to school. Further discussion will take place in the sections which cover the affects of these variables on the dependent variables of the study.

It was anticipated that the majority of the women in the program would have children. The data were somewhat surprising in that just over half the survey group had children. The appropriateness of our assumptions about women with no children and women with children is tested in some of the later data on their motivations and experiences.

Most of the women have returned to school when their children are of school age. This finding is consistent with our predictions.

The survey group exceeds the anticipated number of years of work, volunteer experience and post-secondary education. Both the findings in the literature and the profiles drawn by the key informants suggested less experience in all three areas. The respondents in this survey may well be a refined group of women returning to school. The major influencing factor in their choice of this program was work and volunteer experience. The type of program is also a factor in the mind of the researcher; this will be elaborated on
Motivations, Goals, and Career Plans

Personal and Career Objectives

The personal and career objectives selected by the respondents were to assess their potential, to prepare for a job, and to explore options for self-fulfillment and personal growth. The women value both career-oriented and self-esteem goals. The earlier literature suggested that women returned to school to have their self-esteem needs met but the latter trends and reports indicate that both appear important to mature applicants to colleges and universities. The key informants suggested that the objectives of the women in this group might be career-oriented or self-fulfillment oriented; the group would be divided and might tend toward the self-fulfillment side. The findings in this study do not support that hypothesis.

The data indicated that the self-esteem needs of the women are more adequately met in the program than are their career and employment goals. The respondents described their satisfactions with the program in relation to personal growth; in addition, those respondents with the objective of exploring options for self-fulfillment and personal growth tended to be more satisfied with the program.

The nature of the group and the type of program are both factors which bear some discussion. The group of women in this survey are in some senses a refined or protected group of women returning to school.
They are selected specifically for their suitability to the program and the profession. They may be seen as a protected group in that a humanistic concern for them as individuals would be shown by the instructors. The women indicated that they received support and understanding from the instructors. The type of program they are in facilitates clear personal and career goals, which we see in this group. The nature of the program or training could also be viewed as an extension of mothering and nurturing. These factors point to the hypothesis that this survey group may in some ways be special and that the data on motivations and goals of this group may not apply to other groups or other individual women returning to school.

The level of satisfaction felt in relation to career and employment goals does not equal the satisfaction felt in relation to personal growth goals. The career objectives of the respondents are not completely met through the program. Two issues are raised. One issue relates to the profession and the other to the institution. In the professional sense, the question is raised whether the women in this program are going about their career education appropriately by entering this type of program. The data imply that the women desire employment circumstances which may not be available to them or for which they may not be seen as qualified. The women also express frustration with the lack of university transfer credits from this program. One could speculate that when the women entered the program, their career expectations were lower than at the time the survey was conducted near the end of the semester and that accounts
for the dissatisfaction expressed in this area. It is also possible that the personal goals are greater at the beginning, these needs are met and then career goals take on greater importance.

Several implications for the institution result from these data. The first relates to the career and guidance counselling services and the direction that might be given to the applicants. One questions if the women were directed inappropriately into traditional female careers or inappropriately in light of their career interests. Whether sex-role biases characterized the counselling or whether options were explored with the women are questions which should be addressed. A second issue for the institution resulting from the data is employment related. One of the goals of community colleges in British Columbia is job preparation. The responsibility of the program/college may not be job finding, but it must certainly be in the employability of its graduates. It appears that graduates from human service programs in the province have difficulty finding employment. The colleges need to concern themselves with limiting admissions into these programs or with reviewing the credibility of these programs in the social service profession.

It was hypothesized that the following independent variables would be positively associated with personal and career objectives: the age of the respondent; the number of children the respondent had; the ages of these children; and the respondent's satisfaction with the program. These hypotheses were upheld.

A relationship between personal and career objectives and the following variables was not sufficiently strong to sustain the hypotheses:
length of time since the woman was last enrolled in a course; marital status; and plans upon completion of the program. Those respondents who were never married may be different in their objectives than those who are married, but because of the small sample size, we are unable to test for these differences. It is possible that there is not an association between "objectives" and "plans upon completion of the program" because of the self-fulfillment motives of the respondents.

In Vignette I, where we tested the effects of marital status and the age of children on what our respondents perceived as appropriate behaviour in a woman's decision to seek self-fulfillment in a career, we found no significant relationship. Most of the women in the study were or are presently married; half of the women have children at home who are mostly of school age. One can speculate that although the demographic characteristics of the respondent group are traditional, their ideological orientations are less traditional as seen in the outcomes in the vignette. The respondents may also have resolved potential conflicts arising from marital status and having children when pursuing a career. The fact that their program of study was near completion at the time of the survey would support the notion of such a resolution.

In Vignette II, we tested the effects of the sex of the instructor or an authority figure on what our respondents perceived as appropriate behaviour in a woman's assertiveness in communicating her learning interests. We found no significant relationship. It would appear that the respondents feel confident in expressing their needs and that the sex of the instructor is not a factor to them. This finding confirms the importance of and clarity in the career objectives of the respondents.

Reasons for Furthering Education

The most important reason for the women in the survey group to further
their education was an attraction to this specific program. The writer wonders whether the respondents were motivated initially by some other factor to further their education such as, wanting self-fulfillment in a sphere outside the home, and then became attracted to this program because it offered an extension of their life's experiences or because they were influenced through counselling to enter the program. The interest of the women in personal growth may also have increased their attraction to this program in particular.

The hypothesized relationship between age, marital status, children, and satisfaction in program with "reasons for furthering education" was sustained in the findings. The respondents were satisfied with their decision to enroll in this particular program for the following reasons: increased self-confidence, personal growth, clarification of career interests, and increased knowledge. In light of these expressed satisfactions, their attraction to this type of program is appropriate. These satisfactions are being expressed retrospectively of the decision and, therefore, could refer to the outcome of the decision. We do not know how the respondents felt about their decision earlier in the program year.

Influences in Decision to Return to School

The two important influences in returning to school for the women in the survey group were: direct work or volunteer experience in the field of social work and career and guidance counselling. As discussed earlier, the issue of the counselling services is indicated as an important one. The quality of counselling is important and the nature of the counselling is critical. A distinction can be made between counselling aimed specifically at the returning woman student and counselling merely servicing her. The respondent's past
experience and its influence on her decision support the research findings of the social services employment study.

Other literature emphasizes the influence of friends and family on a woman's decision to return to school. This is not borne out by the findings of this study. A woman's spouse or parents had little influence on her decision. The spouses provided the major sources of financing for her education and did not appear to deter her in her decision. Vignette I supports this suggestion.

Another item of influence receiving low priority from the respondents was "program advertising". This finding has implications for women interested in returning to post-secondary education and wanting information, and for the colleges in their outreach into the community.

**Plans Upon Completion**

The plans of the respondents upon completion of the program are either to seek employment or to enroll in further studies. Most of the women were aware of jobs that would interest them and had begun making job enquiries.

The job characteristics of importance to the respondents are job satisfaction; personal growth; and freedom to innovate and experiment. The realities of the chosen job characteristics for the women are questionable. The training they are given prepares them for particular types of job roles in the social service profession, roles which at times resemble a "technician" function. These potential jobs are not necessarily geared to providing the desired job
characteristics. One questions the preparation that the program and counselling services give the women to the realities of work at this career training level. The expectations of the students in the program are fairly high in both the academic and employment areas. The program possibly screens the applicants rigorously and, consequently, accepts women who should have been directed to a university program. The data on the group of women who left is insufficient to surmise anything but one might speculate that they recognized the discrepancy between their expectations and the realities of their training and, therefore, left the program early. The screening of applicants, therefore, becomes a factor for careful consideration for the institution.

Needs, Personal and Institutional Experiences

The most frequent problems experienced by the women in the survey group were "work overload" and "uncertainties about the value of the program in the marketplace". The college's responsibilities lie in both areas of concern. The writer wonders whether the concern about work overload may also be linked to their lack of preparatory education, lack of time, lack of skills, lack of support, and other items listed in the question on problems. These problems have been given considerable attention in the literature and by the key informants but did not stand out in this study. Perhaps the respondents chose "concern about work overload" because it was being experienced as an immediate concern.
The hypotheses that "time since last enrolled in a course", "age", "number of children" and "marital status" were associated with the problems that a woman might experience as a result of her participation in the program were upheld. In the findings of this survey, the younger students expressed concern about costs, the time of day classes are offered and lack of confidence in handling the program. These data are not congruent with the literature; it has been assumed that these would be the concerns of the older students. The women with children experienced lack of support from instructors. One wonders whether the lack of support also stems from other sources, such as family and friends; the women may not expect support from them (a possible traditional expectation) and, therefore, hold higher expectations of the program instructors. These same respondents were least satisfied with the program. Although the students' reactions to the program were generally positive, the students who had negative experiences with instructors or felt lack of support from instructors expressed less satisfaction. Input that the writer received from both the students and instructors during the research process, highlighted some tension between students and instructors; it appeared to be manifested in mistrust and worry about getting jobs. This could be seen as consistent with the findings in other areas of the study.

The data on the association between the ages of children and problems experienced in the program are somewhat unclear; there wasn't a clear distinction in problems experienced by the women with children in the various age categories. Those respondents with
no children produced unanticipated results; their concerns were with: location of campus, distance, transportation; lack of confidence in handling the program; and a preference for part-time studies. Data on the predictability of age, marital status, and children would be useful in understanding these discrepancies. As mentioned earlier, a larger sample would be needed to produce such data. It is also possible that the assumptions made in this area about women are not appropriate.

The personal problems identified by the survey group were diverse. The three receiving most attention were: emotional stress; family and home responsibilities; and worry about getting a job. Based on the findings, we do not know specifically what contributed to a woman's emotional stress. The writer would speculate that the lack of support from instructors, family, and friends played a significant role. In addition, the data on concern about work overload and employment identify other areas contributing to emotional stress.

Personal problems experienced by the respondents were associated with the following independent variables: age, marital status, number of children, and ages of children. There was not an association between personal problems and program satisfaction. Possibly the women separated their personal problems from their career interests.

The needs articulated by the respondents were linked to their concerns about work overload and employment. The women also clearly expressed the need for better career and guidance counselling services.
Summary

In summary, the reader should bear in mind that two variables probably had an effect on the findings of this study: a) the time of the year the study was conducted - a time when students may be more confident and when certain frustrations are lower; concerns about employment will naturally be high; b) the survey group was an intact group; many women returning to school are not enrolled in this type of program, and, therefore, may look different from the descriptions provided in this study.

The literature served mainly as a source of ideas to be explored but the populations in earlier studies are not directly comparable with this one. The literature dates back a number of years and the population of returning students has in all likelihood changed. In addition, the literature refers to a variety of post-secondary programs; this study refers to a community college career training program.

The discussion represents the perspectives of the writer and her analysis of the data. Further discussion will take place with the students, instructors, and the college administration. The data may well assume new meaning at that time. Some recommendations have been drafted to serve as a beginning point for discussion and plan of implementation.
Recommendations for Further Research

a) The full spectrum of local problems and needs should be assessed, giving particular attention to the returning student and the adult learner. Social indicators predict a marked increase in the age 25 to 44 student returning to post-secondary education over the next years. Research is needed on re-entry education as it relates to subsequent employment status and work patterns.

b) A provincial survey of all Community Social Service Worker programs and their students would serve to test the findings of this survey, to highlight similarities and dissimilarities, and to provide direction for this particular career training program. Program evaluation research would assist colleges in meeting the needs of their enrollees.

c) A follow-up study of the women who left the program early and of the graduates of the survey group should be conducted to identify their employment status and evaluate their college preparation.

d) A study of the counselling services and counselling personnel of the college would aid in understanding present activities and functions and ways of better meeting the needs of the returning woman student.

e) To better understand the concerns of women as they re-enter post-secondary training, the time of research endeavours needs special consideration. The areas of this survey which appear unclear seem to be related to time perspective, i.e. present versus past experiences and perceptions.
Recommendations

a) Career information and counselling services specific to the returning student and adult learner need to be provided or expanded. This need has been recognized and articulated by some college administrators and was re-affirmed by the respondents in this survey. Special re-entry programs should be considered.

b) The status of community college-based social work education programs needs attention. This study's findings suggest that some students view their participation in such programs as a stepping-stone to further education, not as an end in itself. The graduates then appear to receive academic qualifications for which they are given no credit if they were to continue their social work education. This one-year program is fairly in-depth and the students report an increase in their knowledge and skills as a result of it. A review of the program's position in the profession and in the labour market is necessary.
Footnotes

1Since the sample number is small (18), a shift in one case is equal to 5.5 percentage points. Therefore, the reader should bear in mind that the percentages are not stable.

2The reader can refer back to Chapter 3 for the reasons for choosing these levels of significance.

3The reader can refer back to the specific sections earlier in this chapter.

4The critical values of the measures predicting a person's age from marital status resulting from the two-way cross-tabulation are .2961 (age) and .5617 (marital status) (Goodman-Kruskai Tau).
CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSIONS

A description of a group of women who returned to post-secondary education has been offered by this study. The findings not only contribute to Canadian-based information on the educational needs of women but also add to the data-base of the college they were attending. It is the writer's hope that the findings will lead to a clearer understanding of this group of women and others who might enroll in the same program, and that this understanding will benefit women students at the college.

Although some of the findings were consistent with our perceptions of women returning to school, other findings were not. For instance, the findings emphasize that the needs and problems of "returning" women, as opposed to "older" and "younger" women, need to be looked at. The effects of age on variables such as personal and career objectives are not completely clear from this study. Some of our hypotheses about the influence of a woman's age and marital status were not upheld. Furthermore, this group of women demonstrated clear personal and career objectives for themselves, when other groups of women have been described as unclear about their goals.

The self-perceived needs and problems of this group as documented in the study, have clarified, in some instances, and altered in others, the predictions we have made. The results should encourage us to be less inclined to make assumptions before researching the problem. In the same light, the writer cautions the reader against generalizing these findings to other groups of women. The group under
study may not characterize the women in the same career training program in other parts of the province or women in other post-secondary programs.

The findings highlight two areas of concern for the women studied; these are employment-related and counselling-related concerns. The educational opportunities that are made available to women should be such that they enable women to participate more satisfactorily and fully in the labour force. Whether this goal has been met by this program is in question. Further research would need to be conducted, although there are indications that the status of the graduates from this program within the social work profession is low. The women also expressed a need for better counselling services. It has been documented in the literature that one of the greatest barriers inhibiting women from access to appropriate learning opportunities may be inadequate and inappropriate career counselling for women. The women surveyed in this study appear to have pinpointed two key issues for consideration by post-secondary educational institutions and two key issues which play an integral role in the social and economic position of women in Canada.

A pilot study such as this has its limitations and, therefore, encourages one to look forward to and recommend the next steps that need to be taken. One anticipated plan involves the women students, the program instructors and the college administration in looking at the implications of the findings and recognizing the potential for change. The writer, secondly, recommends and hopes for additional research to be conducted on women learners in British Columbia and
Canada.

We can be encouraged by recent events such as a conference in Vancouver last month entitled, "Learning Opportunities for Women: Skills Training in the 80's". This conference was initiated by the British Columbia/Yukon branch of the Canadian Committee on Learning Opportunities for Women. The recommendations that resulted from the conference point to increased opportunities for British Columbian women to participate more fully in education and in the labour force. The opening of a new women's office with the Ministry of Labour was announced; one of its goals would be to identify and take action to remove barriers to women's participation in skills training. A recommendation of this study was reiterated in that improved counselling services for women are needed which are non-sexist and which would provide information on non-traditional careers to women.
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APPENDIX QUESTIONNAIRE
Attached is a questionnaire which is being used in a study entitled, "Women Returning to School: A Study of the Needs, Interests, and Characteristics of the Women in the Community Social Service Worker Program".

The purpose of this study is to gain an understanding of women who are returning to school, specifically those enrolled in a community college career training program. Our objective is to obtain information about your needs, goals and background so that recommendations for change can be made. It has been recognized in Canada recently that particular consideration should be given to women's educational needs and opportunities for learning. It has been held that the present structure of the training situation and in most settings the work place reflects and serves the interests of men more than of women. Once women's needs have been identified, program requirements can be assessed and the opportunity for change can be recognized.

We, therefore, invite your participation in this survey. The questionnaire has been designed so the questions are readily answered; and we expect the average time to complete the questionnaire to be 45 minutes.

Douglas College has shown interest in this study and has given approval to administer the questionnaire to the students enrolled in the Community Social Service Worker Program.

Your participation is entirely voluntary; you may withdraw from the study at any time that you may wish to discontinue your participation or you may decline to answer any of the questions. These actions will in no way prejudice you or influence your class standing.
No name is requested or required. Therefore, the information you provide is confidential. The data as you provide it will be used by the researcher and research advisor only. It will then be analyzed and presented so that no individual respondent can be identified. The returns from you will be destroyed at the end of the research project time (July, 1980). To ensure that the resulting information is used and of benefit to you and other women, the major findings will be presented to the college and other groups concerned with the educational needs of women. I will also try to arrange for you, the students, to get feedback.

If you complete the questionnaire, it is assumed that you are agreeable to the use of the resulting data in the ways just described. Thank you for your co-operation.
I. This section covers questions about your interests and experiences while a student in the Community Social Service Worker Program at Douglas College.

1. When you first made contact with the college about taking this program, how long had it been since you last enrolled in an academic or vocational course? [Check (✓) one]

   _____ Less than 1 year  _____ 6-10 years  _____ 21-30 years
   _____ 1-3 years  _____ 11-15 years  _____ More than 30 years
   _____ 4-5 years  _____ 16-20 years

2. When you first came to the college, what personal and career objectives did you have? [Check (✓) the three most important objectives below]

   _____ to prepare for a job
   _____ to qualify for a better job and/or promotion
   _____ to become more educated
   _____ to receive a diploma, certificate, citation, or college credit
   _____ to receive counselling and information about career opportunities
   _____ to make contact with other people
   _____ to develop skills to become more effective in personal family relationships and/or social relationships
   _____ to explore options for self-fulfillment and personal identity
   _____ to assess my own potential to develop further competencies
   _____ other (specify) ____________________________

3. What were some of the reasons or factors for furthering your education? [Check (✓) the three most important ones]

   _____ dissatisfied with my job
   _____ fewer home responsibilities
   _____ illness or death in the family
   _____ availability of funds
   _____ economic need to work
   _____ family or marital changes
   _____ attracted to this program
   _____ encouragement and/or recommendation from others
   _____ personal growth and fulfillment

continued ...
_____ moved close to college
_____ other (specify) ____________________________________________

4.(i) In choosing to further your education, what were your most important reasons for enrolling in the Community Social Service Worker Program? (Please briefly list and describe)
a) ____________________________________________________________
b) ____________________________________________________________
c) ____________________________________________________________

(ii) How satisfied are you with this decision? [Check (√) one] 
_____ very satisfied
_____ satisfied
_____ neutral
_____ dissatisfied
_____ very dissatisfied
Please specify why you feel this way

5. In your decision to enter the present career program, which of the following influenced you to enter the program? [Check (√) all that apply ]
_____ husband
_____ parent
_____ relative, friend or acquaintance who works in the field of social work
_____ relative, friend or acquaintance not in the field of social work
_____ direct work or volunteer experience in the social work field
_____ college course or instructors
_____ service received from a social worker or social work agency
continued ...
program advertising (pamphlets, brochures, tape, meetings)
media (TV, radio, newspaper)
career or guidance counselling
other (specify)

6. Which of the following problems has been very important during your participation in the program? [Check (✓) all that apply]

- lack of preparatory education for the program
- costs
- location of campus, distance, transportation
- time of day classes are offered
- length of classes
- negative experiences with instructor(s)
- job responsibilities
- lack of specific skills and abilities
- lack of time
- courses do not quite respond to interests
- lack of confidence that I could successfully handle the program
- uncertainties about the value of the program in the marketplace
- would have preferred part-time studies
- lack of support from classmates
- lack of support from instructors
- concern about work overload in the program
- concern about work underload in the program
- concern about rigidity of program
- concern about flexibility of program
- other (specify)

7. From a personal standpoint, which of the following problems have been very important during your participation in the program? [Check (✓) all that apply]

- lack of self-confidence
- lack of personal direction and/or purpose
- insufficient support from family
- family and home maintenance responsibilities
continued ...
lack of physical energy or physical endurance
emotional stress
anxiety about money
concern about personal care of children
concern about child care arrangements (i.e. daycare)
medical reasons: personal illness, family illness, pregnancy
worry about getting a job
other (specify) ____________________________________________

II. This section covers questions about your background

8. What is your age?
   _____ 20 or under  _____ 36-40  _____ 56-60
   _____ 21-25  _____ 41-45  _____ 61-65
   _____ 26-30  _____ 46-50  _____ 66 or over
   _____ 31-35  _____ 51-55

9. What is your marital status?
   _____ single (never married)  _____ married
   _____ separated or divorced  _____ widowed
   _____ other

10. How many children do you have at home or are you responsible for caring for?
    _____ none  _____ three  _____ five
    _____ one  _____ four  _____ six or more
    _____ two

11. Indicate whether these children are in any of the following age categories
    _____ no children  _____ 7-12 years  _____ 18-22 years
    _____ birth-3 years  _____ 13-17 years  _____ 23 years and over
    _____ 4-6 years

12. Indicate the major sources of financing for your education.
    _____ employer subsidy  _____ family (parents, relatives)
    continued ...
13. Before you entered this program, what was your highest level of education?

- Grade 10 or less
- Grade 12 equivalent
- Grade 12 completion
- technical or business school
- some college or university training
- Bachelor's degree
- graduate and/or professional training
- other (specify)

14. If you attended and/or completed college/university, what was your field of study?

- does not apply to me
- Liberal Arts and/or Social Sciences (e.g. English, History, Languages, Economics, Psychology, Fine Arts, Music, etc.).
- one of the professional fields:  
  - Agriculture
  - Commerce, Business
  - Dentistry
  - Education
  - Home Economics
  - Law
  - Library Science
  - Medicine
  - Nursing
  - Pharmacy
  - Social Work
  - Other (specify)
  - other (specify)
15. If you did not continue your schooling after high school, indicate the primary reason. [Check (✓) one]

- does not apply to me
- wanted to work
- funds not available
- lack of interest
- marriage, pregnancy
- illness (self or family)
- parents not in favour
- questioned my ability
- lack of motivation
- other (specify)

16. Estimate the total combined number of years of paid employment you have had. [Check (✓) one]

- none
- less than one year
- one or more years, specify

17. Estimate the total combined number of years of volunteer experience you have had. [Check (✓) one]

- none
- less than one year
- one or more years, specify

18. If you were not engaged in paid employment at the time you enrolled in the present program, please check (✓) the primary reason.

- does not apply to me
- no desire to hold paid employment
- home responsibilities
- was raising children
- inadequate training
- husband's preference
- no financial need to work
- no accessible job opportunities in my field
- was satisfied with volunteer work
- other (specify)

III. Below are questions specifically designed to assess the career program, your experience at the college, and to provide an opportunity for recommendations.
19. Indicate your degree of overall satisfaction with the Community Social Service Worker Program.

____ very satisfied
____ somewhat satisfied
____ neutral
____ somewhat dissatisfied
____ very dissatisfied

20. On the basis of your experience in this program and at the college, what changes would you recommend? (Please be as specific as possible).

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

21. What aspects of the program and college are you most satisfied with? (Please be as specific as possible).

__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________

continued ...
IV.

22. Upon completion of the program, what are your plans? [Check (✓) one]

☐ have a permanent job to go to when studies are completed
☐ have no job but am seeking one
☐ plan to enrol in further studies
☐ am looking for short-term contract work
☐ do not intend to look for or accept a permanent job in the near future for the following reasons: (write in reasons)

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

☐ other (specify) ________________________________________________________________________________________________________

23. i) Are you currently aware of any jobs that interest you? [Check (✓) one]

☐ Does not apply to me
☐ no, none
☐ yes, potentially
☐ yes, know of one satisfactory opportunity
☐ yes, know of more than one satisfactory opportunity
☐ yes, know of a job(s) but know it wouldn't satisfy me for very long

ii) Do you feel your qualifications/training are suitable to your interests?

☐ yes
☐ no

please comment ______________________________________________________________________________________________________
24. To date, how many job inquiries have you made? [Check (√) one]

- none
- three
- five
- one
- four
- six or more
- two

25. If you are aiming to obtain a job when the program is completed, please select from the following list the three job characteristics to which you attach the most importance.

- does not apply to me
- job security
- job satisfaction (nature of work)
- promotional opportunities
- opportunities for personal growth
- freedom to innovate and experiment
- opportunity to receive close supervision and/or on the job training
- convenience (proximity of job to home)
- other (specify)

Write below any additions or comments you wish to make to your replies.

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

_________________________________________________

Thank you for your participation.

V. This section covers a variety of questions about your beliefs and attitudes.

Please read the vignette and then answer the questions.