The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting

Lewis W. Broyden, B.Sc., B.Ed.

Department of Graduate and Undergraduate Studies in Education

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education

Faculty of Education, Brock University

St. Catharines, Ontario

© December 2005
Abstract

This qualitative study explores the motivation of College Vocational Program (CVP) students at one campus of a large College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) in urban southern Ontario. The study is in response to my close involvement with the CVP students as an instructor for five years, and my observation that a greater understanding of the motivational influences affecting the students’ involvement in the program would strengthen teaching and learning, and enhance the CVP educational experience for students and instructors. This study was limited to one CVP program, and a small sample of convenience of 9 CVP male and female students and 6 instructors selected from two classes. The students were chosen based on their verbal abilities to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in regard to answering the research questions posed. Through interviews with students, instructors, and a job coach, this study addressed four main questions relevant to college vocational students and motivation: defining student success, encouragement, discouragement, and perceptions about academic and vocational learning. The interview questions for both students and instructors were designed by me and were based on themes derived from the literature and from my experience in the program. The findings identify that the students and instructors see success in the program in a slightly different way, the importance of relationships and structure, the hindering effect of disabilities and the importance of accommodation, and the strong aspiration of the students wanting to learn in a supportive accepting environment. The study concludes with implications for further research and theory development.
Acknowledgements

I wish to thank my advisor Dr. Katharine Janzen, whose guidance, timely advice, and especially infinite patience, brought this study to fruition. Your example of kindness and encouragement, and inviting teaching and leadership, exemplifies the tone and themes of this study, and encouraged me to better teaching and learning. I want to thank Dr. Milree Latimer and Dr. John Novak of my thesis committee, who gave so generously of their time and insights. Thank you Marion Parish for your excellent and insightful editing. I wish to thank my department head, Arthur Burke, who has encouraged and supported all my efforts for academic improvement, and who has waited patiently for the completion of this project. I wish to thank those within the Counselling/Disability and Health Services Department for their dedicated support and interest in my efforts expressed in so many ways. I especially wish to thank Denise Brody for suggesting this journey of learning, Sherri Parkins for her prayers, coffee, and encouragement, and Martin Grove for his encouragement and so much listening. I would be remiss to not thank all the CVP instructors who strongly encouraged my endeavours. Thank you Bonnie for supporting me right to the end. I would be remiss in not thanking all of the CVP students whom I have had the pleasure of teaching. I will not forget you. I wish to especially thank my wife Michelle, who with infinite quiet and stoic patience and love, has given up what I am sure seems endless quality time and holiday opportunities, so that I could finish this project. And Josh (my dog), thank you for breaking me away from the computer so we both could clear our heads and get much needed exercise. I wish to thank all of my students who have contributed so much to my life, and hence to this project. I thank God for the ability to do it.
# Table of Contents

Abstract ................................................................................................................................. ii
Acknowledgements .............................................................................................................. iii

## CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

- Background of the Problem ......................................................................................... 1
- Statement of the Problem Situation ............................................................................. 3
- Purpose of the Study ........................................................................................................ 4
- Questions to Be Answered or Objectives ...................................................................... 6
- Rational ........................................................................................................................... 7
- Theoretical Framework .................................................................................................... 8
- Importance of the Study ................................................................................................... 9
- Scope and Limitations of the Study ................................................................................ 10
- Glossary .......................................................................................................................... 11
- Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 12

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE ................................................................. 18

- Effective Learning Through Outcomes ........................................................................... 19
- Affective Learning Through Reflection in the Classroom ............................................... 20
- Learner-Centered Classroom Environment ................................................................... 21
- Motivational Approaches .............................................................................................. 22
- Discouraging Motivation to Learn ................................................................................ 23
- Encouraging Motivation to Learn ................................................................................ 24
- Adaptation and Accommodation ................................................................................... 25
- Conclusion ..................................................................................................................... 26

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES ................................................. 29

- Description of Research Methodology ........................................................................... 29
- Research Design .............................................................................................................. 30
- Pilot Studies ..................................................................................................................... 31
- Selection of Participants .................................................................................................. 32
- Instrumentation ............................................................................................................... 33
- Data Collection and Recording ....................................................................................... 34
- Methodological Assumptions ......................................................................................... 35
- Limitations ........................................................................................................................ 36
- Establishing Credibility .................................................................................................... 37
- Ethical Considerations ...................................................................................................... 38
- Restatement of the Problem ........................................................................................... 39
- Summary of the Chapter ................................................................................................. 40

## CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS ............................................................................................ 42

- Demographics ................................................................................................................ 43

iv
Research Questions .................................................................................................................. 73
Research Question 1: How do college vocational students view and define success, both in the program and in the community? ........................................................................ 74
Research Question 2: What factors encourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities? ......................................................................................... 87
Research Question 3: What factors discourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities? .......................................................... 116
Research Question 4: What are the differences, if any, in the Vocational students’ perception and motivational response to academic learning as distinguished from their response to their vocational learning and experiences? .................................................................................. 139
Summary .................................................................................................................................. 150

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS ...... 151
Conclusions and Implications for Professional Practice .......................................................... 151
Implications for Further Research .................................................................................. 181
Implications for Theory Development ........................................................................ 183
Summary .................................................................................................................................. 193

References .................................................................................................................................. 195

Appendix A: Interview Questions ............................................................................................ 199
Appendix B: Information Letters .............................................................................................. 203
Appendix C: Consent Forms ...................................................................................................... 209
Appendix D: Feedback to Participants .................................................................................... 216
Appendix E: Motivational Level Selection Form ..................................................................... 217
Appendix F: Theme Codebook ............................................................................................... 218
Appendix G: Brock Research Ethics Board Proposal Approval ............................................ 222
Appendix H: Sample Drawings by Rhonda ........................................................................... 223
CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM

This study explored the motivation of College Vocational Program (CVP) students at one campus of a large College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATa) in urban southern Ontario. This student population (age 17 and older) is comprised of students with an Ontario Secondary School Diploma or equivalent with basic and/or modified general level credits, or mature students (age 19 or older) who are unable to meet the minimum academic prerequisites for college literacy and upgrading programs.

For admission, the students are given the Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAATb). This is a battery of tests designed to measure the level of educational achievement among adults. There are four levels of testing available, levels A through D, with level A covering the first 3 years of formal education and level D measuring the equivalent of late high school. The level used for the assessment is dependent on the students’ prior academic achievement. For admission to the CVP, the Form B level of CAATb is used, which covers adults with at least a grade 4 reading level, and tests vocabulary, reading comprehension, spelling, number operations, and problem solving. An interview is also given that assesses the students’ suitability for the program on a social and practical level.

The College Vocational Program is designed to assist the students’ development in academic, independent living, and working skills, through classroom learning and work experience. Providing supervised work experiences, individual vocational assessment, career subjects, and with realistic planning, the eventual goal is to attain appropriate and sufficient life and vocational skills enabling the student to obtain and
retain employment. The program, which operates for four semesters, has approximately 50 students, and conducts two separate academic classes. The division of the students is based on the results of the CAATb B tests, reflecting the students' reading and comprehension levels. The academic content of the curriculum is the same, but adjustments such as a slower pace are made to accommodate the slower reading class. Half of the students' experience takes place in supervised vocational work placements starting part time in the second semester and continuing through the third semester. The students mix with their colleagues during these placements, which become full time during their fourth and last semester.

In this study I explored various dimensions of motivation as perceived by some of the students who are enrolled and participating in the program and some of their teachers. I examined the root factors to gain a deeper understanding of these motivators from a small sample of students. My focus was the exploration of motivation in terms of the students' learning related to academic achievement, technical skills, social interaction, and other learning phenomena that came up in the interviews or in the classroom experience.

I chose to use a qualitative rather than a quantitative approach because I felt that it would give me a rich and holistic overview of the perceptions of these students who have a wide array of learning difficulties and disabilities within the program. The students in this study came from a variety of academic and social backgrounds, with varying degrees of intellectual challenges and abilities. As well, many of the students came to the program with various physical disabilities, ranging from limitations to various senses such as sight and hearing to neurological and other medical difficulties.
such as brain injuries and diabetes. Compounding the difficulties in learning for many of the students as well as their instructors are a wide range of learned and inherited behavioural problems that these students may demonstrate.

I felt that a quantitative approach, although it can yield very precise empirical data, forces one to take a more narrow picture of the phenomena. A quantitative approach is one that I personally would feel more at ease with because of my environmental science background and because testing and crunching numbers towards empirical evidence using the scientific method is seen by many scholars as more reliable scientific evidence. However, because of my association with these students, I feel that much richness of their feelings, perceptions, and motivations would be lost in narrowly describing and looking through a precise set of lenses that could exclude motivational elements inside and outside the rainbow of motivational attributes. It was my hope that the qualitative nature of this approach will provide pertinent information and a deep insight and understanding of what motivates these students.

**Background of the Problem**

As one of five academic instructors in the College Vocational Program, I have been working with CVP students for 5 years, teaching a variety of core subjects including numeracy and English. This close involvement with CVP students has made me keenly aware of their individual and collective academic needs as well as the influence of personal and vocational difficulties on their ultimate success or failure. Through observation, interaction, and academic experience with the students, I have become very conscious of how important the presence or absence of various
manifestations of motivation influence successful individual student learning outcomes.

Most students graduate or leave high school with a mix of excitement, hopes, and dreams, tempered with some anxiety and trepidation about their future. For the average student, decisions about their future are often ongoing and may have been set in motion well in the past, with consultations with parents, guidance counsellors, and significant others. Even if their decisions are more independent and spontaneous, a result of life circumstances such as completing secondary school with few immediate job prospects, there are usually a variety of vocational and academic choices open to them. When the decision has evolved to include a program of further training and education, the student’s emotional response and anticipation may become heightened, leading to a mix of reactions towards entering and completing the goals of the particular program.

I feel this is a particularly bittersweet transition for many college vocational students. Because these students have traditionally been less independent, having had the extensive extra support provided for special needs students in their schools and homes, making the decision to continue in formal education and adjusting to the formalities and demands of a college program may be a formidable challenge. Compounding this adjustment is the reality that often these decisions are made with few other alternative choices and with the students having a minimal understanding of their decision. For some students, there is a great deal of pressure from significant others to continue their education, even though this endeavour has been painful for the students in the past. Some students come into the program very enthusiastic, very
eager to learn everything that is offered, and attentive to the direction and requirements of the program. Other students are much more hesitant, seemingly exerting only minimal effort at best towards achievement of program goals.

This was a qualitative study of the motivation of these adult college vocational students at this one college, as perceived primarily by the students themselves, but also based on the experience and perception of their instructors and job coach.

**Statement of the Problem Situation**

In my experience, I have observed that many students in the College Vocational Program have a great deal of difficulty becoming and staying motivated in both the academic and work placement phases of the program. These students are not achieving their full potential in vocational academic skills or in their vocational work placement abilities. In some cases, these students fail to meet the requirements of the program and thus fail to move on, or they drop out of the program on their own initiative. Beder and Valentine (1990) define the concept of motivation as “the basic reasons, which lead learners to participate” (p. 79) in academic work. In their study of motivational profiles of adult basic education students, Beder and Valentine take their concept and definition of motivation from participation theory, particularly that which recognizes the “diversity” and the “multifaceted nature of motivation” (p. 79). They state their work is built on the decisive research of Houle (cited in Beder & Valentine), who suggested participants could be categorized into three broad groups: “the goal-oriented, the activity-oriented, and the learning-oriented” (p. 79). Other major researchers who contributed to their work included Boshier, Morstain, and
Smart, Boshier and Collins, and Clayton and Smith (cited in Beder & Valentine), who helped “establish the generalizability of a motivational framework” (p. 79).

Schenstead (1997), whose paper “Motivation in Adult Learning: From Theory to Practice” is based on Wlodkowsky’s authoritative book *Enhancing Adult Motivation to Learn* (1985), takes motivation a little further by suggesting motivation can be defined in two different ways. In the first instance, “motivation can refer to the reasons or ‘motives’ that explain why people act as they do” (p. 1). In the second, motivation is used to “refer to a person’s inner ‘wellspring of energy’ which is directed toward constructive goals” (p. 1). If the hope and goal is to encourage students to participate in program activities (which it is), then it becomes necessary to have some understanding of what motivations are at work as well as hindrances that may be impeding others. In order for the students to take full advantage of their learning environment, their “wellspring of energy” needs to be tapped into and utilized. Purkey and Novak (1996), in their definitive book *Inviting School Success*, allude to this energy source by arguing that the only motivation is that present for the obtaining of new ideas and the throwing out of old ones, because “each person has a basic need to maintain, protect, and enhance an individual’s self-concept---to obtain positive self-regard as well as positive regard from others” (p. 33). As a consequence, Purkey and Novak suggest that “rather than spending energy trying to motivate students, teachers can invite students to explore the world of knowledge and imaginative possibilities” (pp. 33-34).

After reviewing 23 empirical studies, Taylor (2000) points out that certain critical indicators are necessary for a transformative capacity in a student, which will
be a reflection of their motivational capacity. In particular, Taylor points to the findings of an extensive study on fostering transformative learning conducted by Neuman (1996) and the critical indicators identified by McKinzie (1997) in an online learning environment. The six key findings found by Neuman in Taylor’s review were,

“an ability to recognize, acknowledge and process feelings and emotions...; second, the role of affect demonstrated both evocative and provocative characteristics...; third, affect played a diverse role when learning from experience...; fourth, the processing of feelings and emotions related to experience was both therapeutic and enabling...; five, the outcome affective learning resulted in an increased appreciation for differences...; and lastly, self-reflection could involve intense emotional experiences” (p. 16).

Taylor sums up the findings by indicating that “it is the learners’ emotions and feelings that not only provide the impetus for them to reflect critically, but often provide the gist on which to reflect deeply” (p. 16). The critical indicators reflective of a transformative capacity identified by McKinzie (1997) in Taylor’s review were “personal indicators (desire, commitment, collaborative culture, degree of computer literacy skills, prior experiences, time), access indicators (availability of technology), and process over product indictors (project-oriented curriculum, non-traditional assessment methods)” (p. 18). Taylor cites Pierce (1986), who indicates that some students are more predisposed to change than others, which is reflected during “critical incidences” (p.18), which may motivate students towards change and learning. Purkey and Novak (1996), in speaking from the perceptual tradition, a
cornerstone of invitational education, “believe that behaviour is based on perceptions” (p. 21). Purkey and Novak cite the work of Gardner (1991), “who has shown that people lock into perceptions developed early in life” (p. 23). However, they go on to indicate that “each person’s perceptual field can be continually enriched, expanded and modified” (p. 23) when an encouraging and inviting learning environment is present.

I sometimes see this process in my students when they become engaged in some meaningful way after a period of disinterest. Sadly, other students, often those with greater learning abilities, remain minimally motivated in both the classroom setting and in the workplace, despite extensive attempts to engage them in the learning process. I suspect there are several reasons for this, with the roots ranging from sociological and psychological reasons to cognitive and learning disabilities. However, I have observed that all my students who exhibit low motivational levels share the trait of low self-esteem. I believe that in order for progress to be successful at the motivational level, elevating the students’ sense of worth is a necessary element.

This theme is echoed by Rogers and Thorpe (1981) in their evaluation of workbooks to improve motivation levels, and they suggest that for an improvement in achievement, self-concept must be enhanced. They cite the important work of several researchers such as Millard (1979), Fitzgibbon (1980), Mazzarella (1979), and Wlodkowski, (reviewed by DeLeonibus, 1979), who stress the correlation between self-concept and school achievement. Purkey and Novak (1996), in stressing the importance of enhancing self-concept, advocate that “schools should offer
experiences that are intentionally designed to strengthen students’ self-efficacy beliefs” (p. 31). They believe that it is possible for an individual to enhance their self-concept and state that “although self-concepts tend toward consistency, changes in self-concepts are possible” (p. 33). I believe that there may be links between the students’ self-concept and how they see themselves in a vocational program and their motivational level. Any data collected that can shed some light on this relationship could influence the structure and implementation of the CVP and all those working with the motivational aspects of vocational students, academically and vocationally. Any change in program structure that would be a reflection of the student’s aspirations and capabilities and that would contribute to an improvement in their relationship to the program could improve motivation, performance, and ultimate success.

Beder and Valentine (1990), while discussing 10 dimensions of motivation found in their study of adult basic education students, indicate two main perspectives of motivation are reflected in their findings. In the first, the students’ motivation is driven by “what I hope to do” as an “instrumental gain” (p. 84), reflecting the improvements they can achieve in their social interactions with others. In the second perspective, the motivation is toward self-improvement and “what I hope to be” (p. 84), which may or may not be of less importance to the vocational student. The gains here tend to be more abstract and global, but such factors tended to be very high motivators in their study.
Purpose of the Study

The purpose for doing this study was to increase our understanding of what motivates these students and what demotivates them. Low motivation in some students and high motivation in others presents difficulties for the instructors and students in all learning environments, but vocational students in the classroom present unique problems and challenges. As these situations are presented and confronted, the implications affect the students, their instructors, and their work environments in the classroom and in the workplace. All of the students face varying degrees of discouragement. Some of this discouragement is linked to everyday disappointments that we all are confronted with. However, for us, these may appear to be minor curves and bumps in the road that can be overcome; for these students, minor life alterations can become major potholes and roadblocks. Compounding the problem are minor to severe learning and behaviour disorders, often compensated for by inappropriate learning and avoidance techniques that prevent necessary change for new learning situations. As well, in coming to the college after years of exposure to special education support, many of the students feel left out of the mainstream and unable to compete in an increasingly complex and technical world. They want what the world has to offer, but they feel they are in the disadvantaged position of not having the required skills and abilities necessary to earn enough income to exchange for the goods and services they want from the marketplace. Although many of these students feel there is little hope, I feel that in having a better understanding of their motivations, those who work with and instruct these students will be better able to give these students the understanding and skills needed to help them prepare for and
experience hope for their futures. I believe most instructors, including myself, want to give our students their best. I also feel that there is much more that we can do in the teaching and learning environment to encourage and motivate these students towards desirable and practical learning experiences that will continue to be lifelong. Research into the motivation of these students can ultimately be of benefit to the students personally, the program and its aims, and to others working with similar populations in school and vocational settings. Through successful learning and engaging in the college and work environments, their voice and the right to participate meaningfully and productively in their community will be much enhanced.

The curiosity about motivation seems to be an extension of my need to understand myself as well as others. When I was in elementary school, I am sure that outwardly I appeared strongly unmotivated to my teachers and others around me. I say outwardly because my poor work habits and disorganization produced and exhibited poor academic results along with aggressive and disruptive behaviour. Inwardly, I did not like my academic performance, but I felt I was not capable of better achievement. Efforts in the past had produced mixed results and often failure. Although I yearned for more productive academic achievement, I felt that at that point in time, it was not within my capabilities. My learning strategy was next to nonexistent, and most of my academic skills and knowledge I achieved were the result of osmosis and accident. However, I felt deep inside that somehow, with some trick or help, I could do more.

Upon entering secondary school, it somehow felt like a new start. There was a positive attitude shift on my part and the beginning of feelings that I might be able to
achieve success. I wanted to have success, but I still had deep feelings of inadequacy and inability to compete. At the same time, I found myself discovering books, science fiction, and some interest in history and geography. If I tasted success in an area, I became more motivated. If I experienced failure or great difficulty, I tended to give up, and my academic motivation waned as I pursued other outside interests.

Throughout my formal educational years and in other learning experiences in life since those instructive years, there have been stimuli that have enhanced my motivation in a myriad of learning experiences and events that severely decreased my motivation, exploration, and resulting participation in both social and academic endeavours.

**Questions to Be Answered or Objectives**

Through interviews with individual students, instructors, and a job coach, this study addressed several questions relevant to college vocational students and motivation. These were:

1. How do college vocational students view and define success, both in the program and in the community?
2. What factors encourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?
3. What factors discourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?
4. What are the differences, if any, in the vocational students’ perceptions and motivational responses to academic learning as distinguished from their responses to their vocational learning and experiences?
Rationale

I believe that motivation is a major factor in determining the success or failure of the CVP students in the program. A variety of allowances and encouragements, including technology and individual support and counselling, are available to meet many of the special needs presented by the students. Many of the students take advantage of these early in the program when needed, and a few others embrace the program and support as it progresses for them. However, despite sustained encouragement and direction from program staff, some students choose to drop out of the program early, and a few others fail to meet even the minimal academic or vocational requirements as the program progresses. For others in the program, they are just happy to get by, more by reflex than commitment, and I feel that they miss valuable growth opportunities. Those who fit into the latter patterns often exhibit a recognizable lack of motivation towards meeting success at any level. It is these students that I am most concerned about and feel that a better understanding of their motivational dynamics could lead to improved program organization, instruction, and learning materials.

There are several reasons why I wish to take this course of inquiry. I have a personal interest, involvement, and concern for each individual student and their vocational achievement and success, as an instructor in the College Vocational Program. I have been working in the CVP and with these students for 5 years, teaching a variety of subjects including numeracy, English, study skills, health and safety, and physical education. This follows 4 years of teaching geography, history, and science at the Junior High and High School levels. My involvement with the
CVP students has brought me face to face with them and their academic challenges and needs and issues involving personal, social, and vocational difficulties. These issues are often related to their academic and vocational difficulties, presenting complex and often immature, non-productive, and even aversive responses towards program goals. Although the students in most programs exhibit a wide range of intensity and motivations, I have noticed that many students who enter the CVP are poorly inclined to put forth the effort necessary to reach their potential, academically and vocationally. Indeed, for some there seems to be a residual resentment towards being in the program, while for others it is a breath of fresh air and encouragement. I have observed that vocational students tend to exhibit less social and academic maturity in the college setting than their peers in other technical and academic programs. As a result, they are less self-directed, more hesitant to reach out and explore the opportunities presented to them, both within the program and outside of the program, thereby often missing many opportunities for life experiences and growth.

Although I have found in my review of the literature that there are a myriad of studies available on adult learning and motivation, I have found little research done into the motivation of adult vocational students in either their work or academic environments. Through this research, I hope to add additional information and a deeper understanding to fill this gap in the educational literature.

**Theoretical Framework**

This study was grounded in several theories related to adult motivation in learning, with implications for classroom teaching. Knowles (1984a), who is one of
the most well-known proponents of andragogy and the practice of adult education, and Brookfield (1986), who also grounds his approach to understanding adult education in andragogy, form the core of this theoretical framework. Knowles (1984a) outlines andragogy as a set of assumptions about adults as learners, and in response, he provides suggestions for the planning, management, and evaluation of adult learning. Knowles (1984b), in outlining the four main andragogy assumptions, states that "the learner is self-directing"; "adults enter into an educational activity with both a greater volume and a different quality of experience from youth"; "adults come ready to learn", and "they enter an educational activity with a life-centered, task-centered, or problem-centered orientation to learning" (pp. 9-12). This learning theory is very applicable to the learning and motivational practices of CVP students because it values their life experiences and need for self-directedness as an integral part of their learning process.

Building on the theory of andragogy, Brookfield (1986, p. viii) is critical of a nondirective resource approach to educational practice and proposes a transactional approach in which the experiences and learning needs of the student become an integral part of educational priorities. Brookfield points out that while "self-directedness...is seldom found in any abundance ...the enhancement of self-directedness is the proper purpose of education" (pp. 94-95). Brookfield also scrutinizes the "behavioristically inclined, competency-based" assumptions of andragogy, which suggest "educational programs should be organized around life-application sequences, and that learning experiences should be organized around competency development categories" (pp. 98-99). He asserts these are problematic
because they ignore the "reflective domain" and "underestimate the large amount of learning undertaken by adults...for the joy and fulfillment it provides" (p. 99).

I agree with Brookfield that self-directedness in learning is not in abundance with basic CVP learners. However, there is an interest, sometimes competency based, in their own learning, but often these learners need encouragement, approval, and direction for that undertaking. Although the CVP program and the students' learning lean towards the competency-based assumptions, my own experience suggests that many of my students enjoy some aspects of learning that have little or no immediate apparent 'lifeapplication'.

Other researchers contributing to the motivational and learning theoretical framework provide diversity and depth to the understanding of the CVP student's motivation and participation. The authority of John Dewey (cited in Demetrion, 2001) and his influence on the understanding of the learning process add to this theoretical core. John Dewey's concept of growth, the ability to learn through experience, is central to Demetrion's study of student reading progress and can enhance our understanding between effective and affective instruction. Dewey's concept of growth also provides support for the link between academic and vocational learning. Likewise, John Dewey (cited in Prentice, 2001) argued strongly for educating through vocational training. Beder and Valentine (1990) build on the works of Houle (1961) while providing theoretical support through their writings on motivational diversity with its relevance to the adult learner in education and learning. Recognizing this multifaceted nature of motivation can permit the adult
learning environment to accept a diversity of outcomes coming from a diversity of learners.

Beder and Valentine (1990), in looking through the lens of participation theory, provide substantial insight into the motivational profiles of adult basic education students. Through two frames of data, quantitative and qualitative, in their motivational profile research with adult basic education students, 10 dimensions of motivation were identified: self improvement, family responsibilities, diversion, literacy development, community/church involvement, job advancement, launching, economic need, educational advancement, and the urging of others. Given the literature identifies a “multidimensional” nature of motivation, this addition to motivational theory points to the need for a flexible curriculum meeting individual needs for enhanced motivation and retention.

Wlodkowsky (1985) looks at the importance of motivation and how motivation is related to the learning process. His approach is summarized in his “time continuum model of motivation” (p. 61), in which each learning experience is broken into three time divisions, each of which contains two of six factors of motivation he has outlined. The first time division, the “beginning learning process,” includes the factors “attitudes and needs”; the second time division, the “during learning process,” includes the factors “stimulation and affect”; and the third time division, “ending learning process,” includes the factors “competence and reinforcement” (pp. 61-62). Wlodkowsky indicates each time division or critical learning period “provides opportunities where particular motivational strategies will have maximum impact on the learner’s motivation” (p. 60).
Weimer (1990) links motivational theory to learning and instruction and how it can be improved, especially at the postsecondary level. Weimer proposes a “five-step process” that faculty can use to guide their pursuit of better teaching: “Step One: Developing Instructional Awareness; Step Two: Gathering Information; Step Three: Making Choices About Changes; Step Four: Implementing the Alterations; and Step Five: Assessing the Alterations” (pp. 34-42).

Cross (1988), whose work is rooted in motivational theory, also supports improved teaching and learning at the postsecondary level. Cross’s work is especially relevant to the motivation of students who have been disillusioned by their past educational experiences and supports individualized learning.


I explored the prevalence of some of the critical indicators necessary for a transformative capacity indicated by Taylor (2000) and the personal dimensions and relevance of Mezirow’s transformative learning theory for basic adult learners in the CVP Program.

Purkey and Novak (1996) add a perspective beyond the concept of motivating students, in their belief that students are always motivated but need to be presented with a safe and inviting learning environment that encapsulates the students self-esteem and democratic desires while being perceptually anchored.

Howard Gardner (1983) in his definitive book, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, argues that intelligence is more than what can be measured by
a single Intelligence Quotient (IQ) test, and that everyone has at least seven intelligences (i.e., linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, and two personal intelligences, intrapersonal and interpersonal) blending into a unique cognitive profile. In my teaching experience, and especially my experience working with the CVP students, I am often surprised by the creativity and abilities strongly exhibited by the students over and above those demonstrated by their CAATb scores, in what Gardner would express as a particular intelligence. Gardner defines intelligence as “the ability to solve problems, or to create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings” (p. x). He suggests that “the mind has the potential to deal with several different kinds of content, but an individual’s facility with one content has little predictive power about his or her facility with other kinds of content” (p. xi). The findings in Chapter Four and my discussion of the implications for teaching practice in Chapter Five provide some indications of these varied competences that I have found in the CVP students.

**Importance of the Study**

This is an important study for both the teaching and learning of college vocational students. The stated goal of the CVP is to provide an opportunity for the students to sharpen their formal education and obtain gainful employment at the end of the program. In this process by default, the students and their teachers also have the opportunity to provide a milieu of encouragement and personal growth along with the academic and practical skills. In our postmodern culture, the willingness and ability to be a lifelong learner is crucial for sustainable employment in a rapidly changing technological environment. To this end, the receptivity of the students
towards learning and their motivation to learn and succeed will play a crucial role in this progression.

The study provided an opportunity to explore the motivation and interests of the students in their educational process and history and provided information on the inhibitors and motivators that follow them through their learning process. It is important to know why these students have chosen to participate in the program. Information on influences that affected this choice will reflect their interest and motivation and can guide the instructor and program on how to design and implement teaching materials and techniques that will encourage student participation. To this end, it will be important to examine the relationship of motivation and the integration of the occupational and academic parts of the program in order to find greater meaning in the integration to the student and ultimately to the program itself.

As well as looking at the students' relationships to the program, I also took a deeper look at some of the more subjective elements of student motivation that foster their transformative learning. For example, I have observed that the development in important areas of individual agency and group ownership and its subsequent interaction plays a particularly critical role in the success of the students in the CVP program. As well, for many CVP students, the ability to reflect adequately on their learning opportunities and difficulties is often severely limited, resulting in barriers to learning. Taylor (2000) points out the importance of the "interrelationship of critical reflection and affective learning" (pp. 15-16). The findings of this study provide some insight into the difficulties in reflection exhibited by some of these students and
identify ways of removing barriers and of creating a learning environment that could encourage greater reflection.

Along with their cognitive difficulties, most of the students in the program have been diagnosed with learning disorders (LDs). These LDs provide extra challenges with content and instruction for the students as well as for their instructors. This is true also in the area of work competencies and workplace interventions. From my observations and dialogue with CVP students, many feel that because they have LD difficulty in some areas, they cannot learn at all. A greater understanding of how these students cope with and react to their learning disorders in regard to motivation provides some insight into more effective means of personal and instructional accommodations with the potential to lead to greater academic and vocational success.

Fundamental to my approach to motivation is my belief in the strong correlation between self-concept and school achievement. Rogers and Thorpe (1981) cite several prominent researchers such as Millard (1979), Fitzgibbon (1980), Mozzarella (1979), and especially Wlodkowski (reviewed by DeLeonibus, 1979), who consider self-esteem as a significant contributing factor to school achievement. The findings of this research will help build on this foundation, providing insight into more encouraging ways of meeting the CVP students’ needs on an affective level, while encouraging a more personal positive self-concept.

**Scope and Limitations of the Study**

This study was limited to a small sample of convenience of 9 CVP students and 6 instructors selected from the two program classes. Both male and female students
participated. The students were chosen based on their verbal abilities to communicate their thoughts, feelings, and experiences in regard to answering research questions posed. There is a further limitation in that only one CVP program was studied. For all of these reasons, the findings cannot be generalized. However, they will enhance and deepen our understanding of the phenomena explored.

Glossary

*Affective learning strategy*: It accepts and includes as a strategy the reflective aspects of learning, while encouraging learner-centered and self-directed learning. It generally involves flexible evaluation and is not dependent on prescribed outcomes.

*ADD*: Attention Deficit Disorder. A childhood disruptive behaviour disorder that can persist through adolescence and into adulthood. It is characterized by ongoing inattention and/or hyperactivity-impulsivity occurring in several settings and more frequently and severely than is typical for individuals in the same stage of development. Typical behaviour consists of a persistent inability to sit still, focus attention on specific tasks, and control impulses. It is also known as Attention-Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

*Asperger Syndrome*: Asperger Syndrome is described by Kutscher, of the Department of Pediatrics and Neurology, New York Medical College, as an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) in which “the individual exhibits relatively good verbal language, with milder non-verbal language problems, and a restricted range of interests and relatedness.” Asperger Syndrome is also described by the Mayo Clinic and Attwood (2003) as a pervasive developmental disorder that exhibits autistic-like behaviours and marked deficiencies in social and communication skills.
Autism: Autism spectrum disorders (ASDs) are a group of developmental disabilities caused by unusual brain development. It is a syndrome consisting of a basic disturbance of cognitive development and abnormalities of language and communication with a variety of secondary behavioural and emotional problems. People with ASDs tend to have problems with social and communication skills, resulting in unusual ways of learning, paying attention, or reacting to different sensations.

CAAT\textsubscript{a}: College of Applied Arts and Technology, 1 of 24 colleges across Ontario.

CAAT\textsubscript{b}: Canadian Adult Achievement Test. This is a battery of tests designed to measure the level of educational achievement among adults and consists of items with adult content.

CAAT \textit{B}: Canadian Adult Achievement Test. This is a battery of tests designed to measure the level of educational achievement among adults and consists of items with adult content. Form B level of CAAT covers adults with at least a grade 4 reading level and tests vocabulary, reading comprehension, spelling, number operations, and problem solving.

CVP: College Vocational Program. The CVP is specifically for students with learning difficulties and is designed to assist the student's development in academic skills, as well as skills for both independent living and working. Through classroom learning and work experience, the student has opportunities to gain life and vocational skills, with the ultimate goal being preparation for employment. Supervised work training experiences are at the core of the program.
**Diversion students:** Students who use school primarily as a social or escape/stimulation activity.

**Down Syndrome:** Down Syndrome is a genetic condition caused by extra genetic material from the 21st chromosome. In the chromosomal disorder, the 21st pair of chromosomes contains three chromosomes instead of two, resulting in some degree of cognitive disability and other developmental delays, contributing to mild to severe learning and physical characteristics.

**Effective learning strategy:** Learning is inclined towards behaviouristic and pedagogical strategies and the building of competency. Educational programs revolve around lifeapplications and tend to be performance based, producing or looking for intended outcomes.

**Emic:** Making use of categories recognized within the culture being studied rather than using an outsider’s categorization.

**Exceptionality:** Broad inclusive term that encompasses both gifted children and those who function below the norm in some way.

**Learning difficulties and disabilities:** A group of disorders that affect the ability to acquire and use listening, speaking, reading, writing, reasoning, or math skills and vary in severity.

**Motivation--High:** Indicates an elevated, consistent effort and level of participation in learning.

**Motivation--Low:** Indicates a small, sporadic effort and level of participation in learning.
Motivation—Medium: Indicates an average effort and level of participation in learning.

Self-actualization: It is the process of reaching beyond the existence of available data and perspectives, transcending previous boundaries, and gaining new insights.

Transmissive environment: An effective learning approach that tends to transmit or hand down the material to be learned from one person to another.

Conclusion

In Chapter One I introduced the study. In Chapter Two, I present a review of the literature related to this study. In Chapter Three I describe the research design, methodology, and procedures for data collection and analysis. Chapter Four presents the findings and their interpretation. Chapter Five provides conclusions and recommendations for further research, professional practice, and theory development.
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

My understanding of motivation and the College Vocational Program (CVP) students continued to expand both through my teaching experience with them and as I reviewed relevant literature on encouraging participation. Although many of the insights gleaned came from sources other than those related directly to basic education and vocational students, I believe that the concepts identified in the literature are universal and are applicable to vocational students.

All people start with their basic needs and their practical or effective reasons for learning. However, Demetrion (2001) points out, in citing Dewey, that learning needs to move into the affective domain for continued growth and development. I believe this is true, and it is an important thread woven in the literature reviewed here and subsequent research. Beder and Valentine (1990) define the concept of motivation as "the basic reasons, which lead learners to participate" (p. 79). Schenstead (1997) takes this concept further by suggesting motivation can be defined in two different ways. In the first, "motivation can refer to the reasons or 'motives' that explain why people act as they do" (p. 1). In the second, motivation is used to "refer to a person's inner 'wellspring of energy', which is directed toward constructive goals" (p. 1). There was also a consensus towards learner-centered environments in the literature and away from the more traditional pedagogical approach. Knowles (1984b) describes the learner involved in the pedagogical approach as a "dependent personality" with the teacher "making all the decisions about what should be learned," and with the motivation of students occurring "primarily through external pressures" (pp. 8-9). In contrast, much of the literature
reviewed provided a strong link between academic with vocational training and identified the students’ interests as motivation and on a course towards self-directed learning. Reflection was a central theme, sometimes a difficult and unlearned task for many basic students. A major and necessary learning issue addressed in the literature and relevant to many students in all programs is accommodation for disabilities. Significant advancements in these accommodations have proved useful for those with learning disorders, helping to motivate and bridge the gap towards a continuation and appreciation of learning.

In the literature reviewed, two distinct views of motivation and the approaches used towards educational enhancement emerged. The first, an effective approach, is inclined towards behaviourism and the building of competency, such as that presented by Prentice (2001). Educational programs revolve around lifeapplications and tend to be performance based, looking for outcomes. The second view, which is characterized by Mezirow’s Transformative Learning Theory, reviewed by Taylor (2000) and the writings of Dewey cited by Demetrion (2001) and Prentice (2001), is more affective in nature. It accepts and includes the reflective aspects of learning while encouraging learner-centered and self-directed learning. My review of the literature explored these approaches through the lens of motivation and their implications for the learner in the classroom, particularly basic adult learners with disabilities.

**Effective Learning Through Outcomes**

An effective learning environment originates from behaviourism, with the belief that learning and motivation will stem from application needs. The focus is on a
change in the individual’s behaviour. Learning centers around problems to be solved, on the competency of achieving earlier levels of instruction, and motivation is increased by the immediate application of skills learned. Several authors, (e.g., Beder & Valentine, 1990; Demetrion, 2001; Prentice, 2001) acknowledge its influence in the classroom, but I found no research literature that practiced this approach exclusively. Beder and Valentine look at this approach as “what I hope to do,” and as an “instrumental gain” as apposed to self-improvement and “what I hope to be” (p. 84). This is in contrast to the andragogical model outlined by Knowles (1984b), where “the learner is self-directing” (p. 9) and “ready to learn” (p. 11). Demetrion, while observing a student in his Deweyan study, noted that as the student’s “reading ability increased, so did his self-confidence” (p. 84). Demetrion (p. 95) also observed that a student, in reaching his goal to read and write, moved from the application process towards self-development through reflection.

I have also observed this process with basic students, although at a slower pace than more cognitively adept students. Work-based learning programs strongly draw on the effective learning approach. Prentice (2001, p. 2) notes that Dewey (1916) was a strong advocate for integrating academic and occupational instruction. Prentice (p. 4) looks at the success of such an approach in describing the integrated academic and occupational instruction at Bunker Hill Community College and points to its very high 90 % retention rate. Prentice cites Teahen’s (1996) general education and workplace skills study saying, “It is said that integration is less about what is taught than how it is taught. It is outcome driven. It is performance based. It builds on connections...in a context that matters or excites” (pp. 4-5).
Affective Learning Through Reflection in the Classroom

Affective learning, in contrast to the effective approach, puts the emphasis on rational cognitive processes that will encourage motivation towards learning through reflection. It focuses on change reflecting a person’s knowledge because of complex mental processes that also usually include emotions. Several of the authors reviewed (e.g., Brookfield, 1990; Cranton 1992; Demetrion 2001; Rogers & Thorpe, 1981; Taylor, 2000) take a strong affective approach. Taylor indicates that “engaging and promoting affective learning” involves “emotions and feelings in meaning making” (p. 22).

Taylor (2000), in his summary of Mezirow’s transformative learning theory, indicates the importance of the “interrelationship of critical reflection and affective learning...contextual influences...value-laden course content...and the need for time” (pp. 1, 10). Cranton (1992) presents a model of self-directed learning based on the groundwork of Taylor (1987), but “expands on the stages...including a variety of ‘possible paths’ which individual learners might follow” (p. 111). This expression of the transformative process provides insight into possible reactions of adult students into sometimes a different approach to learning that may clash with their expectations. In reviewing McKinzie’s (1997) doctoral research on transformational learning theory and the adult learner, Taylor states the findings show that “certain critical indicators are reflective of a transformative capacity” (p. 18). Taylor also points out that “some learners have a greater disposition toward transformation,” which can be enhanced during “critical incident periods” (p. 18). Cranton describes critical incidents as “a learner’s description of a significant event in his or her life” (p.
Brookfield (1990) describes critical incidents as “events that are recalled vividly and easily because of their particular significance for students” (p. 31).

Demetrion (2001) indicates, “Dewey defines growth as the enhancement of experience through critical reflection and insightful action” (p. 81). Demetrion is referring to Dewey’s “ends in view” (p. 81), which represents the culmination of a particular problem or set of problems, which can lead to new problems and renewed motivation. Rogers and Thorpe (1981) suggest that in order to obtain increased achievement, “self-concept must change” (p. 1). Exercises must be provided that give the students the opportunity to “explore their inward selves” (p. 1), providing the students the opportunity to see themselves as achievers.

**Learner-Centered Classroom Environment**

It is stated or implied throughout the literature that I reviewed, as is my own experience, that the learning environment is important to student motivation and retention (e.g., Brookfield, 1990; Corley & Taymans, 2001; Hughes, 1995; Knowles, 1984a; Mpofu & Watson, 1999; Purkey & Novak, 1996). I have not come across any literature that disputes this assumption. What is vigorously discussed is the extent to which the classroom should function less like a pedagogical atmosphere and more like a learner-centered environment (e.g., Corley & Taymans; Cross, 1988; Howell, 2001; Knowles; Lawler, 1991; Purkey & Novak).

The latter is encouraged, but the pedagogical approach has a legacy of strong influence and is still practiced extensively. Corley and Taymans (2001) express that students may also hold the traditional pedagogical view and see their teachers as “all-knowing experts” (p. 152). Howell (2001) notes that this approach treats the students
as “passive recipients of knowledge” (p. 3). Howell also indicates that adult students take their education seriously, but they may also be “inadequately prepared, both academically and psychologically” (p.2). Brookfield (1990) has found that students from basic to doctoral levels have a “perception of “impostership” (p. 44), a sense that they do not have the ability or right to be in their program. Brookfield also suggests that many students have “authority dependence” and tend towards “institutionally imposed constraints” (pp. 44-45). Corley and Taymans show that even success can provoke high anxiety, as students may have a “fear of failure” (p. 152).

The pedagogical approach is in contrast to a learner-centered style, where the students are expected to bring in some of their own expertise. Howell (2001) says that adult students bring “experience and practical information” (p. 3) to the classroom. He cites Brookfield (1986) and Knox (1977), showing that adult students want to know “how new knowledge relates to what they already know” (p. 3). Howell, in arguing for a movement away from the traditional pedagogical approach that stifles motivation, cites Barr and Tagg (1995); he points out that “to elicit interest that leads to involvement…the curriculum must take into account what questions are most intriguing and significant to students” (p. 2). Corley and Taymans (2001) stress the importance of engaging students in “collaborative planning for instruction” (p. 164). Finally, Demetrion (2001) suggests the importance of a “variety of approaches,” “tapping into intuition,” and using “what would be most effective at any given time” (pp. 93-94).
Motivational Approaches

The brief synopsis of the research presented here points towards a learning environment that encourages growth and development, initially from an external source, then towards internal motivation utilizing cognitive processes. Howell (2001, p. 3) indicates that the traditional pedagogical approach tended to tap and emphasize external motivational techniques. In contrast, Knowles’s (1984b) andragogical model emphasizes the encouragement of internal motivation. Many researchers (e.g., Beder & Valentine, 1990; Demetrion, 2001; Hughes, 1995; Prentice, 2001; Rogers & Thorpe, 1981) indicate that motivation can start externally before achieving internal dimensions. Rogers and Thorpe (p. 13) started teaching with motivation-training workbooks, but it was in combination with the supportive staff that tapped into students’ emotional needs that encouraged internal motivation. Hughes, in using computers as an external motivation to tap into internal personal needs, indicates the students gained the “feeling of being competitive” (p. 1) while learning valuable, marketable skills. Prentice argues that the integration of academic and vocational instruction with “external interests of the students” (p. 7), can lead to increased motivation. Beder and Valentine (p. 84) list a number of external motivating factors for adult basic learners to enter the educational environment. Demetrion sums up the integrated approach by indicating that Dewey’s definition of growth was “the enhancement of experience through critical reflection and insightful action” and “the movement from problem identified to ends-in-view” (p. 83).
Discouraging Motivation to Learn

My literature review found several variables that influence the discouragement of the learner. Two major areas of discouragement have been identified: those of a personal nature (e.g., Babchuk & Courtney, 1995; Corley & Taymans, 2001; Mpofu & Watson, 1999; Taylor 2000) and those inherent within the classroom (e.g., Babchuk & Courtney, 1995; Beder & Valentine, 1990; Howell, 2001; Hughes, 1995). Babchuk and Courtney (p. 402) concluded that where there is a lack of personal influence, those in most need of learning are not participating. Mpofu and Watson point out that adults with learning disorders “may have the repertoire of skills required for success in specific jobs but may be unmotivated to use them” (p. 9). They suggest “prior learning experiences” (p. 10) may interfere in specific situations, reducing motivation and leading to failure. Corley and Taymans agree when they indicate “persistent academic difficulties can have a significant effect on participation” (p. 152). My own experience suggests that significant persistent support with achievable tasks is needed for students with a history of failure to overcome their feelings of discouragement and failure with hope and success. Taylor found that “feelings were often the trigger for reflective learning and an unwillingness to respond to these feelings often resulted in a barrier to learning” (p. 16). I have also noted with several of my CVP students that their limited ability or inability to self-reflect also presented a barrier to their learning.

Within the classroom, Babchuk and Courtney (1995) found that the classroom “social environment” could play a significant role in “participatory behaviour” (p. 399). Babchuk and Courtney (p. 399) cite Jones, Schulman, and Stubblefield (1978)
and Balmuth (1988) on the strong influence of the social environment on participation. Babchuk and Courtney (p. 399) also cite the research of Darkenwald and Gavin (1987), that indicated “the social environment of the classroom contributed to different outcomes” and that “dropouts were less affiliative than persisters” because they were expecting less classroom social involvement. Beder and Valentine (1990) found in their research that when students use school as a place of “diversion” (p. 84), it could be a significant motivation for participation. More specifically, they also found that diversion was a significant factor for those adult students that had been urged by others, such as friends or family, to participate. Beder and Valentine explain “diversion” as being consistent within motivational literature, indicating a “social activity” or “escape/stimulation” (p. 84) within the classroom. These observations are consistent with my experience, but I have also found this group to be less involved in program activities, while having a high incidence of failing to complete the program. Hughes (1995, p. 2), while working with computer technology and the disabled, stresses the importance of avoiding discouraging teaching methods such as initially unnecessary jargon, because it tends to dampen enthusiasm and participation with new technology. The primary teaching and learning approach in the classroom can have a significant impact on student participation. Howell (2001) indicates that the pedagogical approach “places the responsibility for learning primarily on the teacher” and “discourages inquiry and involvement” (p. 3).
Encouraging Motivation to Learn

Many researchers (e.g., Brookfield, 1986; Cross 1988; Howell, 2001; Knowles, 1984b; Lawler, 1991; Schenstead 1997; Wlodkowski, 1999) indicate that adult learners are generally motivated learners. The literature indicates that there are several factors that can encourage and increase the adult learner's motivation and participation. Adult students want to be involved in their own learning, and they have a variety of learning motivations, from life application needs to personal enjoyment. Howell indicates that adult students "take their education seriously," but that they are sometimes "inadequately prepared for college teaching" (p. 2). Howell points to the importance of a relevant curriculum while "supporting adult students' involvement in their own learning" (p. 3). Prentice (2001) feels that "students are much more motivated to write and give speeches on topics that mean something to them, that are something they truly want to communicate" (p. 11).

In my own experience, I have found that students with significant cultural differences or minimal motivation often demonstrate strong interest and involvement when meaningful topics are presented that the students can relate to. Corley and Taymans (2001) point to the importance of "self-determination" (p. 150) in encouraging positive motivation. Demetrion (2001) found in his motivational research that students responded when given the opportunity to experience new challenges, but "acute sensitivities to the nuances of growth...throughout the learning history was indispensable" (p.106). It is important that the learning environment be safe, inviting, and the curriculum relevant while providing encouragement for

Several researchers point out that not all learning involves skills and vocational accomplishments. Beder and Valentine (1990) point beyond “instrumental gains” and towards the psychological factor of “self-improvement” (p. 84). Demetrion (2001) suggests “deeply rooted aspirations” and “authenticity of voice” (p. 101) as strong motivating factors. Beder and Valentine also point out, and my own observations with CVP students would strongly agree, that “launching” (p. 87) the opportunity for the students to restructure and take control of their lives is an especially strong motivator.

Significant others can also play a strong motivating role, depending on the individual and circumstances. Corley and Taymans (2001, p.153), Demetrion (2001, p. 94), and Mpofu and Watson (1999, p. 14) all indicate the importance of “significant others” for life adjustments, especially that of learning. Babchuk and Courtney (1995) support this view, indicating that “personal influence” (p. 394) in terms of “face-to-face contact” (p. 395) can be a strong attraction for participation. In contrast, Beder and Valentine (1990) found in their research of 323 random sampled adult basic education (ABE) students in the state of Iowa that the “urging of others” (p. 87), had a low motivational impact overall in all their tested age groups but played a much more significant role for those in the younger sample. This study exploring the reasons why low-literate adults participate in ABE was conducted using in-depth interviews to produce motivational criteria that could be measured and
compared. In the second phase of the study, these criteria were used to construct a 62-item scale and then used in a questionnaire to measure motivation.

Several researchers indicate that the students themselves must feel that they can be successful, (e.g., Corley & Taymans 2001, p. 155; Demetrion, 2001, p. 84; Rogers & Thorpe 1981, p. 1). Rogers and Thorpe cite Mazzarella (1979), who says “if students are to achieve, they must first see themselves as achievers” (p. 1). Corley and Taymans (p. 155) and Demetrion (p. 84), affirm the importance of students believing that they can succeed by indicating that once a learning experience is successful, self-confidence and willingness to make further efforts increase. Hughes (1995) adds to this theme by suggesting that setting “higher career goals” is an incentive providing motivation leading, to “personal growth” and “the feeling of being competitive” (p.1).

Howard Gardner (1983) in his definitive book, *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*, contends that intelligence is more than what a single Intelligent Quotient (IQ) test can measure. He argued that everyone has at least seven intelligences (i.e., linguistic, musical, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinaesthetic, and two personal intelligences, intrapersonal and interpersonal) that blend into a unique cognitive profile. My teaching experience working with the CVP students provided a clear platform to encounter and observe the creativity and abilities exhibited by the CVP students over and above that indicated by their CAAT$_b$ scores, in effect providing what Gardner would express as a particular intelligence. Gardner defines intelligence as “the ability to solve problems, or to create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings” (p. x). He suggests that “the
mind has the potential to deal with several different kinds of content, but an individual’s facility with one content has little predictive power about his or her facility with other kinds of content” (p. xi). Mayer and Salovey (1990) add to this theory, and suggest that the capacity to perceive and understand emotions defined a new intelligence. They define emotional intelligence as the “ability to monitor one’s own and others’ feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide ones feelings and actions.” (p. 189).

Classroom relationships are declared by Taylor (2000) and Prentice (2001) as motivationally significant. It is pointed out by Taylor that it is a necessity to have “positive teacher-student relationships” in order to facilitate motivation and to foster the “subjective elements of relationship building” (pp. 20-21). Prentice (p. 9) argues that with high faculty interest there is a positive effect on student motivation and retention. Feeling unity among the staff is important to the students, as it transfers positive attitudes and enthusiasm for the learning journey.

Purkey and Novak (1996) stress the importance of “inviting school success,” that is, the creation of an environment that enables and encourages the learners to be successful. These scholars present evidence “that individuals respond best when they share the company of educators who believe them to be able, valuable, and responsible and who intentionally summon them to share in these beliefs” (p. 17). This is particularly relevant for learners (such as the students in the CVP program that is the context of this study) who may perceive themselves as being less capable than others. They define “invitational education” as “a perceptually anchored, self-concept approach to the educative process that centers on five basic principles:
1. People are able, valuable, and responsible and should be treated accordingly.

2. Education should be a collaborative, cooperative activity.

3. The process is the product in the making.

4. People possess untapped potential in all areas of worthwhile human endeavour.

5. This potential can best be realized by places, policies, programs, and processes specifically designed to invite development and by people who are intentionally inviting with themselves and others personally and professionally. (p. 3)

**Adaptations and Accommodation**

Successful students with disabilities in the CVP, such as learning disorders, limited cognitive skills, and physical disabilities, find various compensations that help them navigate through their learning environment. Corley and Taymans (2001, p. 153), in their study of adults with learning disabilities, found persistent academic difficulties had a significant effect in educational programs. They point out that even being academically successful can lead the student to feel they do not deserve their success, leading to a "fear of failure" (p. 153). Corley and Taymans cite Shessel and Reiff (1999) in referring to this as the "impostor phenomenon." Brookfield (1990) refers to the same phenomenon as "the impostor syndrome" (pp. 44-45) and points out that it affects students from basic education to those doing their doctoral studies. Corley and Taymans suggest that "feedback" in the form of "support from others for their areas of need...allowing them to focus on areas in which they excel" (p. 160) can help the students gain control of their own learning, leading to increased
motivation. Corley and Taymans (p. 159) and Rogers and Thorpe (1981, p. 7) agree that self-promoting skills training can be taught and lead to improved self-knowledge and self-worth. Rogers and Thorpe (p. 1), in researching a motivation-training program using a workbook approach developed at the Central Texas Vocational Skills Training Center in Killeen, Texas, showed that motivationally trained students could show improvement in their self-concept. In their graphical analysis of the data of motivationally trained and controlled groups, Rogers and Thorpe found that the students motivationally trained “scored higher on self-esteem” (p. 7). Mpofu and Watson (1999) indicate that adults with learning disabilities may have their strengths and weakness go unrecognized by themselves and others, often leading to varied “compensatory strategies” (p. 2), but not obtaining needed accommodations.

My experience in the CVP program is consistent with these observations. I often find students using a variety of coping strategies, such as refusing to write out of fear of being exposed, which is unhelpful to the learning process. Mpofu and Watson (1999, pp. 4-5), in emphasizing that each student is different, suggest individualized adaptations such as oral instructions rather than written, while others may need modifications only to written material. Hughes (1995), in using computers and adaptive equipment to help the mobility, visually, and learning impaired to interact with their learning environment, says the use of technology gives the students “the feeling of being competitive and equal to the non-disabled” (p. 1). Hughes also points out that “before the student can be assisted, the disability must be accommodated” (p. 4). Hughes indicates that technology use provides “therapeutic value and has opened doors to personal growth” (p. 1). Hughes concludes by saying:
“Society, as well as the people with disabilities, should focus on the ability of the person, not the disability” (p. 6).

I found little in the research literature that addressed the needs of basic education or vocational students. Much, but not all, of the teaching and learning motivational material reviewed was gleaned from sources other than those related directly to basic education vocational students. The core of motivational knowledge and theory is based on the foundational works of Wlodkowski (1985) and Cross (1988), that of the adult learner from Brookfield (1986), Cranton (1992), Cross, and Knowles (1984a), and that of teaching the adult learner from Brookfield, Knowles, and Weimer (1990). To varying degrees, these sources provide the foundation from which the other researchers based their research and presented their findings.

I believe that the concepts and applications reviewed are applicable to college vocational students. I believe the degree of motivation elicited in a student will have a defining effect on the degree of participation in the learning process and success in a formative learning program.

The literature review indicated that motivation can be external in nature (as applied by the behavioural pedagogical approach) or internal in nature (with an emphasis on rational cognitive processes and reflection) and can be influenced by both effective and affective approaches to teaching and learning. The learning environment, in using these approaches, also plays a crucial role in the ultimate degree of teaching and learning success. The literature and the researchers reviewed (e.g., Brookfield, 1990; Demetrion, 2001; Rogers & Thorpe, 1981; Taylor, 2000) supported the importance of the learning environment by taking a strong affective
learning approach and encouraging learning through reflection. Although learning and personal development may be slower and perhaps not as extensive for CVP students as is found in their peers in the college population, it has been my experience that for the majority of CVP students, reflection, learning, and personal growth do take place.

Based on my experience and on the findings of researchers such as Corley and Taymans (2001), Mpofu & Watson (1999), and Hughes (1995), adaptations and accommodations have proved useful for those with physical and learning disorders, helping to motivate and bridge the gap for these individuals towards a continuation and appreciation of learning.

The literature also provided encouragement for the linking of academic with vocational training (e.g., Prentice, 2001; Teahen, 1996), starting with the student’s vocational interest to provide motivation towards learning, while encouraging a bridge towards self-reflection and transformation.

When I started this literature review, I asked myself, How do I motivate my students? With the insights gleaned from the literature review, I came to ask the question: How can I encourage my students to cultivate and tap into their own internal motivation?

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I presented the themes related to this study that emerged from the literature reviewed.

Chapter Three describes the methodology and procedures used.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

This study explored the motivation of students in one College Vocational Program (CVP) as perceived by a small sample of 9 students with learning disabilities and 6 instructors. The study took place at one campus of a large, very multiculturally diverse College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) located in a large urban area in southern Ontario.

**Description of Research Methodology**

This was an exploratory descriptive study based on qualitative data. I chose to do a qualitative rather than a quantitative study because I felt a qualitative approach would produce a rich and holistic overview of the complex internal and external motivation that these students exhibit. The CVP student population exhibits a wide range of cognitive and learning abilities that are reflected in their approach and response to the skills and tasks presented in the learning environment. The CVP students also present a wide range of social, psychological, and physical disabilities that play an integral part in the learning process.

A quantitative approach can yield precise empirical data, but it may limit observations and force one to take a narrower view of the phenomena explored. A quantitative approach can be seen as producing the empirical evidence that many scholars see as more reliable scientifically than qualitative data. Neuman (2000) describes this orientation as using “standardized methodological procedures…and then [analysis of] the data with statistics, an area of applied mathematics” (p. 125). Neuman goes on to state, “quantitative research eliminates the human factor” (p. 126).
Because of my experience with these students, I felt that much of the important and rich data expressed in feelings, perceptions, and motivational attributes of the CVP students would not be reflected in a narrowly focused quantitative empirical study. The qualitative inductive approach provided pertinent data and deeper insights and understanding of the complex dynamics of the motivation and participation that these students demonstrate. Neuman (2000) points out that “qualitative researchers emphasize the human factor and the intimate firsthand knowledge of the research setting” (p. 126). Glesne (1999), in describing the qualitative interpretivist paradigm, indicates that this method “portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex, and ever changing” (p. 5). The qualitative approach with its use of personal insights, experiences, feelings, and induction into understanding social life provides the opportunity to take advantage of shifting personal and classroom experiences and dynamics as seen by me, other instructors, and the students themselves.

Research Design

The data were generated by qualitative inductive methods to produce insights and meaning. Neuman (2000) states that “qualitative data are empirical” (p. 145). The method used in the research consisted of interviewing selected CVP students, a job coach, and selected instructors. The interview technique was particularly useful in that it allowed me to probe responses for deeper understanding. The data generated by the interviews were from an emic perspective. This perspective makes use of the categories presented by the subjects and is interpreted within the social context in which they are generated. Neuman points out that the “meaning of a social...
action or statement depends, in an important way, on the context in which it appears” (p. 146). The interviews of participants in the CVP program provided that content.

The interviews were structured (Appendix A), but from the interpretive tradition. The purpose was to obtain data, explanations, and understandings that could not easily be obtained solely by observation. Glesne (1999) states, “the opportunity to learn about what you cannot see, and to explore alternative explanations of what you do see, is the special strength of interviewing in qualitative inquiry” (p. 69). The interviewing of the job coach, other instructors/counsellors, and observations from my own experiences with CVP students over the past 5 years helped to triangulate and enhance the credibility of the findings.

**Pilot Studies**

This pilot testing allowed me to enhance the face validity and credibility of the questions while testing the questions for clarity and relevance. I interviewed 3 volunteer students, one deemed to have demonstrated low motivational skills, a second with demonstrated medium motivational skills, and a third with demonstrated high motivational skills, based on my own observations. These 3 students were from the same target population, and their responses were also included in the findings. I interviewed them using the interview guide (Appendix A) to test the content and face validity of this tool. I also interviewed an instructor, whose responses were also included in the final study. These volunteers were informed that it was a pilot study.

The feedback on the questions was returned in two ways. First, during the interview process, I periodically asked the participants if they understood the question or to clarify their answer. Second, if they had difficulty answering or if I felt they did
not have a full understanding of the question, I would reword the question when asking it again. The participants were usually very good at telling me they did not understand the questions and asking for clarification. I believe this was because of the experience and comfort level the student participants had built up with me as an instructor. I did not have to rewrite any of the questions, but I did find that I needed to break some of the questions into smaller segments or verbally reword the questions for some of the student participants when they indicated either verbally or by gestures (such as a shrug or questioning stare) that they did not fully understand.

The questions were often catalysts for the instructor and especially student participants to share insights and contributions beyond what the questions asked. The practice in interviewing helped me to increase my ability to be as objective as possible during the interviews so that my views would not influence the responses.

The pilot study allowed me to observe and learn more about my own interviewing and observation techniques and my effectiveness in the interview process. As the interviews proceeded, I found it beneficial to speak a little louder, keep any additional questions or clarifications as simple and clear as possible, and avoid contributing my own thoughts that could interfere with the contributions of the participants. The pilot study gave me the opportunity to assess the interview question sequence, the interview length, and whether the substance of the information gleaned was relevant and sufficient to answer the research questions posed. It also helped clarify any modifications to the research that might be helpful for obtaining valuable data.
My pilot studies of both the student and instructor participants brought out technical clerical issues of recording the conversations. Two tape recorders were used in the interviews. In the first student interview, a microcassette tape recorder was put on VOR (Voice Operated Recording) to conserve the use of the tape. As I later tried to transcribe the tape, it became apparent that when the participant talked softly the microcassette did not record the conversation. The backup tape was also found to be too noisy for adequate transcription, and it was replaced for later interviews. The VOR was turned off for subsequent pilot studies, and an external clip-on microphone was subsequently obtained for the study interviews and attached to the backup tape recorder for greater clarity. Although the interview recordings were discernable for the most part, soft voices by both the participants and me as well as accents and indiscernible words spoken by students made some of the transcription difficult. One student participant who was difficult to hear agreed later to a subsequent interview and was a major contributor to the findings.

**Selection of Participants**

The selection of the 9 study student participants (3 deemed to have demonstrated low motivation, 3 with demonstrated medium motivation, and 3 with demonstrated high motivation) was made from students enrolled in the College Vocational Program at one campus of a large College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATx) located in a large urban center in southern Ontario. Five instructors/counsellors and one instructor/job coach who teach in the CVP program and were familiar with the students were also interviewed. Purposeful convenience sampling guided the selection of the students and instructors. Because there is only
one job coach in the program, that person was selected because of his/her unique observational position. I selected instructors who, based on my observations, had differing views and perspectives on CVP students.

Each of the student participants was selected purposefully for their observed level of motivation, ranging from low to medium to high. To obtain their consent, the purpose of the study was individually explained to each potential student participant. If they indicated potential interest and acceptance for participation, the Information Letter to Potential Student Participants (Appendix B), and Consent Form for Student Participants (Appendix C) were given to the potential participants. The contents of the forms were discussed and made clear to the potential participants. Two additional forms were given to the students: the Information Letter to Parents/Guardians of Potential Participants (Appendix B) and Consent Form for Parent/Guardian (Appendix C). Most of the students were eager and wanted to participate. A couple of students who were not asked to participate asked if they could. One male student immediately refused to participate. He had a history of a minimal participation and amount of work and manipulative behaviour towards both the program and his peers. I overheard him later trying to influence other students not to participate, who were relatively close peers and who subsequently did not participate. One of the students, a male of Hispanic origin who had a history of avoidance and noninvolvement in class participation, also refused emphatically. Two other close female peers who indicated interest in participating in the study and who had histories of more participatory involvement in the program came back with their forms unsigned, indicating their parents did not want them to be involved. I sensed that there may
have been some influence by the negative male student in the decision not to participate, because of a change in their disposition from an initial warm acceptance to a cool and reserved refusal. Another highly motivated student of Asian origin eagerly wanted to participate, but his parents refused to grant permission. I have found that some students and their parents of ethnic origins have a strong suspicion of authority figures and tend to refrain from any involvement that might attract extraordinary attention.

To obtain consent, the information letters, consent forms, and a return addressed envelope to my faculty advisor were placed in a large envelope. The potential participating students were instructed to take the envelope home, discuss their participation with their parents, and then return the signed consent forms by mail or to their job coach, who would give them to my faculty advisor. All of the students returned the consent forms to their job coach, who subsequently gave them to me. I passed them on immediately to my advisor without opening the envelopes.

The 6 current instructors were asked to independently suggest five potential students for each category (low, medium, and high motivation) and list the names of these students on the form provided (Appendix E). Definitions from the literature on motivation were provided on the form. Three willing participants were selected from the list in each category as suggested by the instructors. Because some of the students have cognitive limitations, the participants were also selected based on their known ability to clarify and communicate their responses to the interview questions and discussions. Six consenting instructors/counsellors/job coach were interviewed based
on the extent of their instructing and counselling relationship and knowledge of the students selected to participate in this study.

Although I have taught all of these students in the past, at the time of the study I was not and would not in the future be their instructor, nor was I in any position to contribute to the evaluation of the students. The students knew this. I was also not in any line relationship with any of the instructors.

Instrumentation

The interview questions (Appendix A) were developed by me based on the themes related to motivation and adult learning that emerged in the literature review and from my own experience of teaching in the CVP program in academic instruction and workplace assignments over a period of 5 years. They were designed to answer the research-related questions relating to the motivation of adult college vocational students described in Chapter One.

Interviews were conducted with 9 students, 5 instructors, and 1 job coach. Although the interviews with the staff were intended to occur first in order to glean any insights into additional questions and themes that could be of assistance in interviewing the students, the students were interviewed first because of time constraints in that they were finishing the program and would soon disperse.

The student participant interviews included pertinent open-ended questions (Appendix A) which were designed to answer the research questions relevant to motivation or its inhibition in adult college vocational students as outlined in Chapter One. The interviews tried to solicit the participants' responses regarding a range of root motivational factors influencing each participant. Throughout the interview
process, I tried to identify the most prevalent and influential educational motivators and detractors in order to gain a deeper understanding of these motivational influences in this small sample of students.

The interviews conducted with the staff probed the instructors' experience, understanding, and insight in regard to the students' motivational responses to counselling, work placement, and classroom activities. The interview questions were openended and mirrored the learning topics explored with the student participants, but from an instructor's viewpoint, with the intent of exploring and gaining insight into all relevant areas of the students' motivational profile.

The interviews of the students, combined with the interviews with their instructors and job coach, provided different perspectives and a deeper understanding of the students' motivational profiles. All the interviews were audio taped with the interviewees' written consent. Written notes were also taken to reference themes that emerged in the interviews and visual cues (nonverbal communication) that enhanced understanding of the verbal responses. The interviews took place privately, as negotiated with each participant, in closed-door counselling offices and took approximately one hour. The only distractions were occasional background noise from activity in the hall and, on one occasion, construction activity.

**Data Collection and Recording**

The interviews occurred at times and places as negotiated with and as determined by each participant. The interviews of the student participants, instructors, and job coach were recorded on audio tape. These recorded interviews were then transcribed by me for further analysis using a word processor on my own
home computer. The audio tapes and my transcription notes were maintained in a locked file drawer in my home. No one except my faculty advisor and I had access to these notes. To ensure nonidentification, participants were given pseudonyms in the reporting of the findings.

Detailed descriptive field notes during the interviews were handwritten and recorded in notebooks, one book for each interview, leaving ample space on either side of the notes for reflective comments. The field notes recorded descriptive observations during and after the interviews, including the identification of emerging patterns and reflections, thoughts, hunches, and feelings in order to provide a rich description. Mental and jotted notes were also included, recording reflections and thoughts of recent events and memories of the participants when I was their instructor. Analytic notes were entered after reflection to reveal and describe deeper understandings of patterns and reflections that emerged during the interviews. The notes were also used as a check against my own biases by reflecting on and comparing the notes against the recorded interview.

There were several problems that came up in doing the research that made it difficult to obtain and evaluate the needed data.

The activity of having the instructors write down the names of the students indicating the motivational levels was not as strong an indicator of their motivation as I had hoped. Because of the number of students they could choose from, only a few of the interviewed students were mentioned consistently in any specific category. These were the highly motivated students. This is consistent with my past conversations with the instructors in which there was often disagreement as to the individual
student’s level of motivation. It also suggests students demonstrate different levels of participation in different classes because of the students’ response to the subject matter, acceptance of the instructor, and, for some of the students, the time of the day that a class takes place.

I could study only those CVP students whom I was no longer teaching or evaluating, and those students were only in the College for a half day each week during the time of the study because they were on work placement for the remainder of the time. Because I had decided to get permission from parents and guardians as well as the students, these permission forms had to go home to be signed. Most of the students eagerly wanted to participate, but three parents refused to give their consent. I speculate that at least one of the refusals was because of the parent’s ethnic anxiety related to authority and legal documentation. I ascertained by observation that one other student’s refusal to be interviewed was related to discussion from another moderately motivated student who had also rejected participation and then urged the potential interviewee not to participate. Some of the students repeatedly forgot to bring in the signed consent form. All participating students did eventually bring in their signed permission forms on the half day that they were in the College, but in some cases, this took several weeks.

I asked the students to bring the signed permission forms to me or give them to their job coach, because experience has taught me that any unusual steps in a process increase lapses in the students’ memory. For these reasons, I found that as the semester was coming to a close, the opportunity to conveniently interview the students was quickly coming to an end. As well, my own teaching schedule and
unforeseen academic testing of the students to be interviewed during two of the interview days created logistical problems for completing the interviews. However, the interviewed students were eager and co-operative, and all the interviews were eventually completed.

In my initial pilot test interview, I used two tape recorders, but both of the tapes were unintelligible, and I had to repeat the interview the following week. On the primary tape recorder, I had pressed the mute button to turn off when there was no sound. The problem was the interviewee talked softly, and much of the conversation was missed. The second tape was placed too far away, and the background noise created by the tape recorder itself was too loud to allow the conversation to be heard clearly. In subsequent interviews, I obtained microphones for both tape recorders, but eventually replaced the tape recorder that was creating the loud background noise with a Sony microcassette tape player with attached high quality microphone. The Sony microcassette tape player provided by far the clearer audio. Both attached microphones were discarded, and a superior clip-on microphone was obtained for the backup tape recorder. The backup tape recorder audio recording improved substantially when coupled with the clip-on microphone put on the interviewee’s shirt. When transcribing the tapes, I still found it hard to understand some of the conversations, partly because of soft voices and sometimes because of accents or speech that was not clear. When I talked softly, I also was not always easy to hear, and if I had been closer to the microphone, that would have helped the clarity.

Transcribing the interviews took much more time than I had anticipated. The benefit of doing my own transcribing was that it allowed me to take a great deal of
care and make sure I understood what was said on the tapes. It also facilitated the content analysis process. If I had hired transcribers, this might have sped up the process, but they may have been less fastidious in their transcription. Although some data may have been lost, I believe the majority of the pertinent information was captured. Allowing someone else to transcribe would also have allowed me to start my analysis much earlier, but I would have missed the ongoing reflection and analysis that occurred during the transcription.

The interviews generated a great deal more data than were necessary to answer the four main questions the study asked. The questions could have been made more precise and concise in order to answer the main questions. Pilot testing did not identify this. Conversely, given additional or several shorter interview opportunities (rather than a long interview) might have helped build the comfort level in the participants to further clarify and expand meaningful data of interest. This would give the participants more time to reflect about the interview subject areas and help them to express greater detail and clarity.

Another, but quantitative approach might be to use a multiple-choice questionnaire using similar questions targeting motivational educational issues but providing multiple-choice answers. This would help strengthen memory and understanding lapses and motivate responses to otherwise difficult questions the students had difficulty answering. Such a questionnaire could be given to the students first and then followed by qualitative interviews to clarify their answers and explore additional areas of interest.
I used coloured highlighters to mark various themes, which proved to be very beneficial in identification and when summarizing the findings. Using the different colours allowed me to skim quickly through the pages after the themes were identified. I also found making small, written notes within the highlighted themes to identify differences, such as the difference between a statement or gesture that indicated a positive or negative attitude, was helpful.

Data Processing and Analysis

As suggested by Glesne (1999, p. 130), I did the initial analysis of the data simultaneously with the collection of the data. The data from the interviews were then inductively organized into categories, synthesized, and I undertook a search for patterns, relationships, and themes (Glesne; Neuman, 2000). This early organizing and analysis, coupled with reflection, began to show the form the study would take. To support this process, field log entries and memos were entered into a notebook for reflection, preliminary analysis, and to act as “links across the data” as recommended by Glesne (p. 131). Using a preliminary coding scheme, analytic files for storing data and thoughts were created, first by “generic categories” for initial organization and then by more relevant “specific files” reflecting the revealed processes that emerged, as suggested by Glesne (p. 130). In the first reading of the transcripts, I identified major broad themes such as relationships and interests. In two subsequent readings, additional broad themes were added such as self-image, as well as subthemes like positive and negative relationships. A few themes and subthemes were originally identified in my log notes and in my notations in the transcripts, but by far the greater part of the data were obtained from the themes in the transcripts. As I continued to
pass through various parts of the transcripts, additional subthemes emerged. Each major theme had its own pages, with subtheme sections, followed by the initials of the respondent and the page numbers of any incident where that theme was found. This allowed me to keep an estimate of the number of occurrences of a particular theme, thus highlighting its potential importance in the study as well as identifying suitable quotes to support the themes. Two separate records were kept, one for the student transcripts and one for the instructors (see Appendix F). For example, as identified from the student participants, under the main theme of motivation, there is a subtheme of external motivators, further linked to a third-level subtheme, rewards. The list of occurrences of the external motivator rewards provided a record of its presence and importance in that it was indicated separately by 5 students and 3 instructors. It is important to note that subthemes can relate back to more than one higher level theme. For example, under the theme “Motivation,” the third-level theme “Not Finishing Work” can be linked back to all of the second-level themes, “Demonstrated,” “Internal Motivators,” “External Motivators,” “Relationships,” and “Work/Success”. Neuman (2000) calls the first overview “open coding...looking for critical terms, key events, or themes” (p. 421). From these analytic data files and the central focus on adult motivation of CVP students, an outline of the particular narrative reflecting the students’ motivational profile began to emerge, providing deep insight into the phenomenon of motivation and its impact. Neuman indicates that “the researcher’s goal is to organize a large quantity of specific details into a coherent picture, model, or set of interlocked concepts” (p. 419). Quotations from relevant and respected scholars will substantiate, enhance, and help clarify the
emerging themes in the study. Data collection ends when (according to Glesne, p. 135) there is a “sense of complete and integrated data.”

When all the data were recorded, analytic coding was undertaken to classify, categorize, and sort the relevant findings from the interviews, notes, and literature to reveal meanings and structure in the study. Neuman (2000) calls this second pass “axial coding...to review and organize initial codes...ideas or themes, and [identify] the axis of key ideas in the analysis” (p. 423). The last pass is described by Neuman as “selective coding,” with the researcher looking “selectively for cases that illustrate themes and make comparisons and contrasts” (p. 423).

Neuman (2000) states that the coding process is “guided by the research question and leads to new questions” (p. 420). In refining this process, Glesne (1999) states: “By putting like-minded pieces together into data clumps, you create an organizational framework” (p. 135). These data clumps were continually sorted and refined according to what appeared to be important, breaking the coded clumps into a variety of subcoded clumps. As advocated by Glesne, each clump of data received a theme name and colour, identifying a concept or central idea. As an adaptation to this procedure, I colour coded the main themes, eventually subdividing some themes and combining others. A codebook was constructed, listing the creation of all themes and subthemes as well as their explanations (Appendix F). The coded material was sorted and arranged in logical and balanced sequences that belonged together to provide the data for analysis and deep descriptions needed for interpretation and for answering the research questions.
Glesne (1999) states that “description involves staying close to data as originally recorded” (p. 149). Wolcott (1994) as cited in Glesne describes analysis as “the identification of key factors in the study and the relationships among them” (p. 150). Neuman (2000) states that “data analysis means a search for patterns in data—recurrent behaviours, objects, or a body of knowledge” (p. 426). Wolcott (1994) as cited in Glesne points out that interpretation occurs when the researcher “transcends factual data and cautious analysis and begins to probe into what is to be made of them” (p. 150). This method of qualitative data analysis emphasizes analytic comparison as outlined by Neuman. My method, which includes Neuman’s method of “agreement and method of difference” (p. 427), looked for regularities, patterned relations, and for contrasts and new explanations. Through reflection, insight, and attentive interpretations of the data, deep meanings, themes, and new or refined concepts and theory emerged from the empirical evidence, providing a motivational profile of these CVP students and their experiences in adult learning.

**Methodological Assumptions**

While I interviewed the participants, I explored the perceptions and observations of the study participants (i.e., emic perspectives), which may or may not have reflected their theories in action and reality. Perceptions often influence subsequent behaviour and are therefore important to study. Cranton (1994) cites Argyris and Schön in pointing out that “most people are unaware of these discrepancies and even when they are pointed out, practitioners are often unwilling to acknowledge them” (p. 194). It has been my experience that many of the CVP students do not always have an accurate perception of their experiences and
behaviours or social interactions. Exposing underlying assumptions provided a clearer picture of the motivating factors involved in the learning experience of the CVP student. In discussing any revealed underlying assumptions, Cranton remarks that “the questioning of the sources, consequences, and validity of the assumptions” (p. 220) is important for critical reflection of these experiences. Cranton notes that “experiences can be selected to maximize the potential discrepancy between learners’ views or values and the experience” (p. 182).

The interviews reviewed and explored the students’ various program and learning experiences and encouraged the participants to reflect on those same experiences to produce deeper meaning and a more accurate description of their reality. Cranton (1994) cites Schön in suggesting that “individuals engage in reflection as they are involved in action” (p. 182). In referring to Kolb’s model (1984), Cranton emphasizes that an opportunity for reflecting on the experience needs to be provided. To some extent at least, the interview process provided the “action” and helped the participants clarify the dynamics of their experience, revealed discrepancies between their perceptions and real experiences, and provided insight into the motivational process.

The interviewing of the CVP students took place in their fourth semester. Although I taught the students in their first, second, and third semesters, I was no longer in any position to influence the welfare of the participants for over 2 months and would not be in the future. I was no longer instructing the students, and I had no counselling/supervisory or authoritative position with them at the time of the study or in the future. The students themselves clearly understood this. The fourth semester is
supervised and taught strictly by their job coach, and the students were made aware of this. The students had received their final academic marks (transcripts) from the College before they were asked to participate in the interviews. I had not had a formal counselling relationship with these students, as it was not part of my job description. However, I had counselled some of the students on an informal basis during critical incident periods and during informal discussions in the past. I recognized that I carried into the interviews a personal relationship and trust gained from these students after providing academic instruction for three semesters. It was this familiarity and trust that I feel provided the comfort, safety, and time necessary to facilitate clarity and truthfulness in the responses of these sensitive individuals. Since the students had nothing to lose or gain, it is reasonable to assume that their responses were as honest as they actually perceived things to be at that point in time.

My relationship with the instructors and job coach was that of a teaching colleague. I had not had, did not have, nor would have any line relationship or evaluative authority with these instructors. It is reasonable to assume that I did not influence their interview responses or that they reported anything other than what was their honest perception of the discussed phenomenon.

Limitations

The purposeful selection of 9 student participants (3 deemed to have demonstrated low motivation, 3 with medium motivation, and 3 with high motivation), 5 instructor/counsellors, and 1 job coach for interviewing is a sample of convenience. The small sample size and purposive sampling and selection process means that generalizations of the findings cannot be made. However, the findings
provide deeper understanding of the motivational profile of CVP and similar students, which is valuable knowledge to inform teaching and learning.

**Establishing Credibility**

Interviewing the students took place in their fourth semester, approximately 2 months after I had had the students as their instructor. For some students, because of their work placements, the time lapse between my providing academic instruction and the students receiving their interviews was up to 4 months. All the students had received their final academic marks from the College before they were asked to participate in the interviews. The students all knew that I would have no further formal relationship with them. My experience and familiarity with the students and the context provided a positive background for enhancing the accurate and comprehensive gathering of data. Sufficient time was allowed for the interview process to provide a comprehensive and accurate accounting of the phenomena.


Through continual questioning in regard to the credibility of my interpretations and alertness to my own biases, subjectivity was minimized as part of the research, with emotions used to identify the subjective lens when it was involved. Glesne (1999) states that “subjectivity, once recognized, can be monitored for more trustworthy research...and in itself, can contribute to research” (p. 105). The triangulation provided by interviewing variously motivated CVP students, interviewing counsellors/instructors and job coaches, and my own observations, knowledge, and experiences with these and other CVP students were reflected upon
and compared with the scholarly literature to help establish credibility. In the coding and analyzing of the data, I actively looked for negative cases or influences that might refute my own or others’ assumptions.

I recruited the assistance of colleagues to help in the selection of potential interviewees and to assist with blinded (nonidentifiable) segments of the data, such as reviewing codes and reviewing my analysis and interpretation of the data. The 6 instructors, who eventually were also interviewed, assisted with the selection of potential interviewees by filling out the Motivational Levels of CVP Students form (Appendix E). Each of the instructors chose 5 potential participants from the students still participating in both CVP classes whom they saw as best representing the low, medium, and high motivational categories. I made a subsequent table for each category and listed all the students identified. I then recorded a check mark for each time an instructor placed the student under that category. Because of time constraints (end of semester) and collaboration difficulties, it was not possible to share and review the interpretations of the interviewees for clarification as I originally intended.

**Ethical Considerations**

All the participants were asked to participate only after I received approval from the Brock Research Ethics Board (Appendix G) and the College’s Research Committee and appropriate departments and at least 2 months after the students had received all marks and evaluations that they would receive from me as their instructor. The students were informed explicitly that I would not be in a position to evaluate their work at any time in the future. In order that the research participants had sufficient information to make a knowledgeable decision about participating in
the study, I informed the participants verbally and in writing about the purpose of the study (Appendix B). They were made aware of by what method the study would proceed, how the interviews would conducted, how much time was anticipated, and in what way the data would be used. Before proceeding with the study, an informed written consent was obtained from the student participants and/or their parents guardians, and the counsellors/instructors and job coach (Appendix C). Participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could freely stop their participation at any point in the study without explanation or penalty of any kind. They were also free to not answer any question they did not wish to answer, and were assured that no participant would be identifiable in any reporting of the findings. The participants were informed that their real names would not be used in the document and all data would be held in strict confidence and secure for the period of time required by the University.

Although the student participants were legally adults, where there was parental or guardian oversight, parents and guardians were informed and asked to provide their written consents (Appendix C). Of the initial 9 students asked to participate (3 for test subjects and 6 for participants), 3 returned their forms unsigned, indicating that their parents did not want them to participate. They were replaced with 3 additional students who did obtain parental consent. Only those participants or whose parents/guardians willingly and voluntarily signed the consent form were included in the study. My interpretation of the data obtained was not presented to the participants for their review to check for the accuracy of my interpretations as I initially intended. Shortly after the completion of their interviews, the student participants completed
their final semester and left the College. It was several months before all the transcripts were completed, and it was no longer feasible to contact the students. Also, because of the memory and cognitive challenges of these students, it would have been difficult, if not impossible for them to remember and interpret their conversations from an earlier date.

Upon completion of this study and after the 5-year period required by Brock University, all data will be shredded and electronic files deleted.

A summary of the findings was made available to participants upon written request to my project supervisor as well as through a posting in the College's professional development department (Appendix D).

Restatement of the Problem

In studying the motivation of students in the College Vocational Program at one campus of a large College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATa) in urban southern Ontario, I investigated some of the root factors that contribute to the success or failure of the CVP students in their academic setting and work environment. The varying levels and complexity of motivation among different CVP students and their varied experiences within environmental and situational changes critically influence student learning outcomes and ultimately student retention and academic success. In the transition from high school to college, from a substantial history of considerable personal dependency on significant others to the program pressure towards greater personal independence, motivation may be influenced in a myriad of ways. Some students are eager to participate and face new learning challenges in a variety of academic and vocational tasks, while other students make only a minimal effort,
Despite significant support and encouragement. Based on student and instructor/job coach interviews, this study addressed several questions relevant to college vocational students and motivation. These were:

1. How do college vocational students view and define success, both in the program and in the community?
2. What factors encourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?
3. What factors discourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?
4. What are the differences, if any, in the vocational students' perceptions and motivational responses to academic learning as distinguished from their responses to their vocational learning and experiences?

In answering these questions, I believe the study has provided a deeper understanding of the factors that are involved in discouraging or encouraging the motivation of the CVP students, and in so doing, the findings address a gap that currently exists in the literature.

**Summary of the Chapter**

In this chapter, I have presented the methodology, research design, and procedures used to study motivation in CVP students in a large College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATa) in urban southern Ontario. This was an exploratory descriptive study based on qualitative data, designed to provide a rich and holistic overview of the motivational dynamics of the CVP students. The study explored the motivational experiences of the students, the perception of instructors and a coach
regarding the CVP students' motivational experiences, my knowledge and experience of the motivational dynamics, and pertinent scholarly literature. Using qualitative inductive methods, 9 students, 5 instructors, and 1 job coach were given structured interviews (Appendix A) from the interpretive tradition to generate rich and meaningful data.

Chapter Four presents the findings and their interpretation in relation to the research questions and the literature.

Finally, Chapter Five discusses the implications for further research, practice, and theory development.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

This study explored the motivation of College Vocational Program (CVP) students at one campus of a large College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAATa) in urban southern Ontario. It was a qualitative approach which looked at the various dimensions of motivation suggested and exhibited by the students who were enrolled and participated in the CVP program. The study, using interviews, looked for the root factors affecting motivation and tried to gain a deeper understanding of these motivators from a small sample of current CVP students as well as their instructors. Although I had previously taught and was acquainted these students, because they were in their final placement semester that included no academics, I was no longer in any way involved in their instruction or evaluation.

The research questions were:

1. How do college vocational students view and define success, both in the program and in the community?

2. What factors encourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?

3. What factors discourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?

4. What are the differences, if any, in the vocational students’ perceptions and motivational response to academic learning as distinguished from their response to their vocational learning and experiences?
Demographics

Nine of 38 students in the CVP program and 6 instructors, 1 of whom was the job coach as well as an instructor, were interviewed. The assessments of motivational levels were determined by the instructors using the independent evaluation form (Appendix E). Pseudonyms are used for all the students and instructors indicated in the study to ensure nonidentifiability.

The students included:

Elizabeth

Elizabeth is an outgoing 22 year-old Caucasian female, who described her main disability as having Asperger Syndrome. Asperger Syndrome is a developmental neurobiological disorder that exhibits autistic-like behaviours and marked deficiencies in social and communication skills. Elizabeth was assessed by the instructors as highly motivated.

William

William is a 19 year-old black male of Caribbean background, often quiet and emotionally withdrawn, with diminished cognitive abilities and significantly below average written and verbal language abilities. William was identified by the instructors as having a low motivational level.

Audrey

Audrey is a 22 year-old relatively immature, often overly sensitive, Caucasian female with lower than normal cognitive and communication abilities, both verbal and written. Audrey was assessed by the instructors as having a low motivational level.
**Gail**

Gail is a relatively mature 20 year-old Caucasian female who sparingly interacts with other students and who has mild intellectual cognitive and written language disabilities but good verbal communication skills. Gail was assessed by the instructors as having a low motivational level.

**John**

John is an outgoing but immature 19 year-old Caucasian male who has a mild intellectual disability. John was assessed by the instructors as having a low motivational level.

**Isaac**

Isaac is a 23 year-old male of Jewish background with mild developmental challenges and impairments in visual and spatial organization. Isaac was identified by the instructors as having a medium motivational level.

**Oscar**

Oscar is a 22 year-old Middle Eastern male of Muslim background with developmental challenges related to written and verbal difficulties. Isaac and Oscar were the best of friends, despite their divergent religious backgrounds, and gave each other constant support socially and academically. Oscar was assessed by the instructors as having a high motivational level.

**Frank**

Frank is a 21 year-old relatively mature Caucasian male compared to his classmates, with some cognitive limitations and difficulty with written
communications but strong verbal communications. Frank was identified by the instructors as having a medium motivational level.

**Yasmin**

Yasmin is a 19 year-old East Indian female with cognitive and verbal and especially written communication exceptionalities. Yasmin was assessed by the instructors as having a high motivational level.

The six instructors interviewed were:

**Norma**

Norma is a female instructor in her mid-50s; she has a B.A. in Psychology and Physical Education and a Master’s in Counselling. She has instructed the CVP students for 8 years in Physical Education and Careers and is a counsellor with the CVP as well as other college students on an individual basis.

**Scott**

Scott is a male instructor and counsellor in his mid-50s; he has a B.A. in English with a minor in History and a Master’s degree in Drama. He worked initially with the CVP program as a job coach for 2 years. He did not teach in the year that the CVP students in this study were interviewed. Scott has instructed the CVP students in Physical Education, English, and a course called “Your Attitude Counts.” Scott is presently a student counsellor for the College and has counselled the CVP students in previous years, but not the students in this study.

**Alison**

Alison is a female job coach and instructor in her mid-50s from the Caribbean. She has Social Service Worker Diploma and is presently working on her Master’s
degree in Counselling. She was the only job coach working in the program at the time of the study. Alison interviews the students and places them in appropriate job settings. She visits the students in their placements, providing advice, support, and interventions when necessary, as well as liaising with the supervisors. Alison instructs and counsels the students in a classroom setting one day a week during their work placement experience.

**Margaret**

Margaret is a female instructor and counsellor in her late 20s; she has a Bachelor of Religious Studies (BRS) and a Master’s in Counselling degree. She has been instructing the CVP students in English and Your Attitude Counts for 2 years and is a counsellor for the CVP students as well as the general college population.

**Charlotte**

Charlotte is a female instructor in her early 40s with a B.A. in General Arts and Science; she and is presently working on her Master’s in Liberal Arts/Adaptive Technology. Charlotte has been instructing CVP students in computers and assistive technology for the past 8 years. She also teaches Literacy for Users of Augmentative and Alternative Communication (AAC) and has taught teachers the use of AAC in the classroom, as well as American Sign Language. She has produced a book for a local school board encouraging accessibility and other supports for special needs students. Charlotte has also edited a newsletter on communication as part of a magazine relevant to the teachers in Ontario.
Ian

Ian is a male instructor in his late 40's, has a B.Sc. in Psychology and a Master’s degree in Applied Educational Psychology. He is currently working on his Ed.D. in Curriculum. Ian has been involved with the CVP program for 8 years. He is currently the Co-ordinator of the program and team-teaches with Charlotte using assistive technology in the computer lab. He is also involved in counselling individual students. Charlotte and Ian give seminars regarding the use of assistive technologies for special needs students and have a Speeches/Meeting Paper published on ERIC.

Researcher

I am a male instructor in my late 50s, have earned a B.Sc. in Environmental Geography and a B.Ed. I have been instructing in the CVP program at this College for the past 6 years and have previously instructed this CVP population of students in their first two semesters in English, Numeracy, Study Skills, Health and Safety, and Physical Education. When appropriate, I have included some observations and anecdotes with additional students not interviewed, based on my experience and knowledge of the students and those of the included instructors.

Research Questions:

This study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. How do college vocational students view and define success, both in the program and in the community?

2. What factors encourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?
3. What factors discourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?

4. What are the differences, if any, in the vocational students' perceptions and motivational response to academic learning as distinguished from their response to their vocational learning and experiences?

**Research Question 1: How do college vocational students view and define success, both in the program and in the community?**

The data to answer research question number 1, from the students' perspective were provided primarily but not exclusively in interviews with the students under the College Background Section from questions 2, 3, 6, 7, and 8; from Learning, questions 1, 2, 3, and 6; from Placement questions 1, 6, and 8; from Work Placement Class questions 2 and 5 and from the Learning in Academic Classes; questions 4 and 6 of the interview guide.

The data to answer research question number 1 from the instructors' perspective were provided primarily but not exclusively by the instructors under Introduction: Background Section from questions 1 and 2; from the College Background Section from questions 7 and 8; from Learning questions 1, 2, and 3; and from Placement/Job Coach question 1 of the interview guide.

**Major Themes That Emerged**

A major theme that emerged to answer question number one was how the students themselves defined success in college. Almost all of the students stated that they saw success in college as finishing the program (Audrey, p. 7; Elizabeth, p. 26; Gail, p. 10; John, p. 10; William, p. 5; Yasmin, p. 9). This success was linked to and
followed strongly by the success of leading to or reaching towards their further goals and dreams; usually a full-time job (Audrey, p. 7; Elizabeth, pp. 8, 26; Frank, p. 9; Gail, pp. 5, 11; Isaac, p. 6; John, p. 10; Oscar, pp. 10, 26; William, p. 5). Audrey expressed these views saying, “I would finish college and find a job in the near future so that I could keep it” (p. 7). William (p. 5) indicated, “I want to pass. I mean go ahead. Get a head start in life. Like move on to the next level.” For some, that also meant obtaining the skills they need to meet those goals (Frank, p. 9; John p. 10; Oscar, p.10). Frank indicated the need to “have the skills that you need to find a job and that you are going to be happy with” (p. 9).

For some students (Audrey, p. 20; Frank, p. 21; Isaac, p. 15; William, p. 15), doing the work was more important than what was being learned or the quality of the end product. I believe this is the result of previous learning experiences and expectations. William expressed this attitude of being successful as “showing up and just handing in work” (p. 15). His demeanour in the class was one of extreme passivity and avoidance, presenting himself as not having anything to contribute. William tended to hide himself behind other students and near a wall in order to avoid eye contact and attention. He often presented a sad countenance, hanging his head down on the table, being reluctant to participate in discussions until prodded or until a topic that evoked his interest and knowledge was discussed. In our interview, as in our classes, William often gave short answers such as “not really” (pp. 2, 7) and “I don’t know” (p. 8). I found both in the interview and in the classroom that when William felt he had something to contribute or felt strongly, even defensive, about something, his demeanour would brighten, and, looking directly at you, he would
emphatically express his ideas and thoughts. For example William said, “No, to tell you the truth, I don’t do what people tell me to do. I do what I want to do. And I choose to learn” (p. 8).

In some cases, the students seem to have felt that the work itself was of less importance than their particular presence and immediate needs and have refused to participate at all. Audrey, when feeling not supported, exhibited this behaviour on several occasions early in the program. She expressed this attitude by saying in the interview “that if people are not nice to me, and not let me share anything, then I will not participate” (p. 11). This is in contrast to Audrey’s normally pleasant, smiling demeanour that is openly friendly and accepting of staff and her peers. During the interview (pp. 10-11), there was a defensive change to Audrey’s face and body language as she pulled in her arms, fixed and rigid in place. In the classroom, on at least one occasion Audrey had succumbed to anger and crying when feeling overwhelmed by social difficulties with peers. Peer relationships and social activities in school were very important to Audrey, finding them comforting, helpful, and safe. She said it was important for her “to make new friends” (p. 5) so that they could “come over to my house and help me with my homework” (p. 9).

The instructors’ view of success in college supported the students’ expression of obtaining new skills (Alison, p. 2; Charlotte, p. 2; Ian, p. 3; Margaret, p. 1; Norma, p. 2; Scott, p. 2). Charlotte said that student success occurs “when they are capable of doing something that they have not been able to do” (p. 2). Charlotte (p. 2) went on to tell the story of how one student with his/her new computer skills was able to help his/her mother send an attachment in e-mail. This resulted in increased self-esteem
for the student and great joy for the student and the instructor. Progress was seen on
an individual basis and was as much social and emotional growth as academic
(Alison, p. 2; Charlotte, pp. 2, 3; Ian, p. 3; Margaret, p. 1; Norma, p. 2; Scott, p. 2).
Scott suggested that success occurs when the students “progress from where they are”
(p. 2). Norma stated that “if I can see the students doing their best to progress in their
academic or social skills, I believe they are being successful” (p. 2).

The students defined success in the community as being successful when they
integrated into a variety of community activities including: music (Elizabeth, p. 3;
Frank, p. 3), sports (Gail, p. 3; Oscar, p. 5; William, p. 3), and working or
volunteering on a part-time basis (Elizabeth, p. 4; Isaac, p. 2; John, p. 3). Two of the
students indicated no direct outside interests (Audrey, p. 2; Yasmin, p. 4). Yasmin
has in the past indicated to me that she likes to go out and socialize with close friends,
but they seemed to be a small, select group. Both of these female students tended to
be very closely sheltered by their families, probably a result of their developmental
disabilities. Both students, especially Audrey, are socially immature and would have
some difficulty functioning in the community on their own. Charlotte pointed out
quite astutely that some of the students “don’t know what they want to do” (p. 11).
This is no different than most young people at this age. What is different for the CVP
students with cognitive and other limiting disabilities is that the vocational
opportunities for them are limited. All the students did indicate that they wanted to
obtain and succeed in a job (Audrey, pp. 4, 26; Elizabeth, pp. 8, 26; Frank, p. 9; Gail,
pp. 5, 11; Isaac, p. 13; John, p. 10; Oscar, pp. 6, 10, 26; William, p. 5). Oscar, in
referring to job success, said, “Being successful is when I am happy and even proud
of myself about it" (p. 22.). Several of the students (Gail, p. 26; Isaac, p. 16; John, p. 26; Oscar, p. 22; Yasmin, p. 32) stated that in order to be successful, it is necessary to do the job correctly and on time. Yasmin, in expressing her anxiety around failure and the need for workplace success, said it is important “to do things right, but maybe if I do things better or faster” (p. 32).

Some of the students were afraid of leaving their student role and the shelter of the educational setting. Moving on to greater independence and responsibilities for themselves can be quite inhibiting and can generate a tendency toward avoidance (both emotionally and practically) in some students. Charlotte commented on this issue by saying, “That’s what we are here for, to get them ready for that” (p. 11). For some, dependent tendencies tended to hang on, even for the most successful. Isaac (p. 20), who was doing well in the CVP program and who had already spent 2 years and graduated from the Community Integration Co-operative Program at another college, still exhibited some dependence when he suggested that the program could be extended to 2 years. Yasmin, who tended to gravitate towards the academics, likewise showed her emotional attachment to them and to school when she said, “I want to come back to here. I can’t believe it’s my last day” (p. 37). When asked what type of a program she would like to come back to, she stated, “any program” (p. 38). Some students, such as John (p. 5) and William (p. 4), come into the program at the instigation of guidance counsellors and parents more strongly than on their own initiative. Their time spent in the program is a struggle for personal independence and realization of their hopes and dreams. William personified this struggle when he said, “When I finish the program, I can do it. I will try something new, find a job, or
go back to school” (p. 3). He indicated that participating in the program supported his efforts towards maturity and being an adult and said, “It’s good because it shows that you are a grown man now” (p. 4). I believe maturation and personal social development take place to some degree with all of the CVP students, but with some, personal change can be considerably slower than with others. John (p. 6), who demonstrated a low motivational level, indicated in the interview that external support towards participation in learning programs had been necessary in the past. He expressed that although he was doing his homework now, he had done that in the past, and when asked if his independence had changed in any way, he said, “I don’t think so” (pp. 9-10). I did notice a slight maturing in his response to demands and tasks in the classroom and in his demeanour in the interview, but it was subtle and seemed muted. Initially, I had found that John’s effort consisted only of what he could casually do in class, but as the year progressed, there were sporadic efforts to do some work at home. In class itself, John’s efforts began to have a tone of more seriousness, indicated by an increased presence of questions and answers related to instructional activity. He continued to present a superficial but less detached presence in class and with his work. When asked if he experienced any feelings when he was asked to do something, John replied, “Not really, no. Nothing really” (p. 19). There was a defensiveness in his posture, and I had the sense he was afraid of his feelings and the exposure of his disabilities, which he emphatically denied having (p. 13).

Other students make and are proud of their substantial gains towards independence. For these students, one of the most substantial and enduring
accomplishments is doing things on their own, often for the first time. This not only strengthens their independence and maturity, but it gives them a sense of worth. Several of the students (Elizabeth, p. 7; Gail, p. 10; Isaac, p. 8; Yasmin, p. 8) enthusiastically expressed their success and delight in being able to work and do things on their own. Elizabeth said, “I have become more independent in my co-op placement. ... I am able to do the work on my own” (p. 7). This confident attitude was present in the interview where, with a pleasant and accepting smile, Elizabeth answered the questions with little hesitation. Elizabeth also reflected this attitude in the classroom, where she was almost always early and would sit up front with a pleasant, open demeanour, willing to share with others, and always exuded an attitude of independent learning.

There is also a maturing and a movement towards greater independence outside of the program. Isaac (p. 6) talked of preplanning and going places to meet friends socially. Gail was very proud of her new-found transportation independence since she started college and said, “Now I drive. I take the bus here by myself” (p. 10). Oscar said he has become more independent (p. 10) and is looking forward to greater personal independence, and explained “If I save up all the money, I would like to move out and live on my own” (p. 26). Oscar always seemed to exude this confidence, both in the interview and in the classroom. Although Oscar was big, he always seemed to have open arms and a big smile and was always willing to help others in and out of class. His openness and acceptance of others were summed up when he said he has made many new friends (p. 8), and “Charmaine (not interviewed) is absolutely special” (p. 6) and “I have lots of favourite teachers” (p. 2).
Several instructors (Alison, p. 25; Ian, p. 19; Norma, pp. 6, 7) felt strongly that a major goal of the program and a determining factor of success is the accomplishment of the students becoming more independent. Alison pointed to the role of maturity in the students being able to gain independence and said that it is important for the students to be mature enough "to earn their own money, to buy their own things" (p. 25). She stressed that it is with this ability to "earn" things that students place more "value" on what they obtain as opposed to "what is given to them" (p. 25). Ian stated that with the growing independence comes "a confidence in their own abilities, which is the best skill we can give them" (p. 19). The corollary to this is that they also learn what their limitations are. Through these academic, work, and social-life environmental experiences, the students mature through greater self-determination and independence. Scott pointed out that the students are "young adults who are still in the process of maturing" (p. 16). When introducing the students to rules, regulations, and boundaries, Scott suggested that instructors need to "introduce these concepts to them gradually, ... but we need to be firm about it" (p. 16). I agree very strongly with Scott that these students need time for growth and maturity to occur. For some it will be quicker than for others, but a firm approach towards maturity needs to be established. Alison (p. 2) saw the self-actualizing success when students apply their lifeskills and behaviour to real-life work placement environments. While saying that "application is what I measure maturity on," Alison (p. 2) indicated change can also include "the sense of confidence and the ability to participate more because they can take the risk in doing so". She also mentioned that "personal interaction" is another measure of success in the learning environment. In
commenting on the students' personal change over the length of the program of a year and a half, Scott expressed that "the change is just amazing. You notice the difference. They go from dependent children to young adults" (p. 13). Charlotte (p. 11) pointed out the differences in abilities and maturing of individual students because of their developmental issues. Charlotte explained that in one student she saw only minute changes, relating it to the student's cognitive level and said, "and you are not going to beat that" (p. 11). In contrast to the more muted progress, Charlotte pointed to the exceptional growth and maturing of students whom we see at graduation and those like Elizabeth, "who just from day one, seemed to have that sense of maturity about her" (p. 11). Scott reminded us that "because of their difficulties, they are acting or working at a level of maturity that's probably well below their years in most cases" (p. 3). Overall, the instructors (Alison, p. 10; Ian, p. 19; Margaret, p. 12) see positive change and increased maturity in these students. Alison summed up the instructors' views when she said, "There is a change no matter how minute it is. Overall it is a huge change" (p. 10). The students (Elizabeth, p. 6, 8; Isaac, p. 4; Oscar, pp. 7, 11; Yasmin, pp. 8, 38) themselves felt and expressed this change. Elizabeth summed up the group's exuberance by saying, "I feel like grown up and feel like I have more responsibilities and more skills, ... and my self-confidence has gone up, and my self-esteem has gone up" (p. 6). Isaac (p. 6) is an exception in that he expressed his feeling that independence had not increased for him. This may be because this is his second college program, and now that initial adjustments to college life were over with, he may have seen any subsequent change in the CVP as incremental. My observations of Isaac since coming into the program...
indicate that he started with more independent behaviours and self-initiated actions on his own than most of his peers, but he also strengthened those incrementally, especially when he became more involved in his work placements.

Ultimately, the self-image of the individual student is reciprocal. It will be affected by how they perform in the program, but in turn it will also affect their performance. Norma (p. 7) pointed out that students who by and large have a positive self-image are more likely to be actively involved in activities than those who are more down on themselves. Generally speaking, the self-image of the students varies, from those whose self-image is positive to those whose self-image is negative. As the students mature through the program experiences, weak self-images are often strengthened. Norma pointed out the importance to their self-image of the students feeling valued and respected by significant others. Speaking of “a little encouragement and involvement” in a student’s life in the program, she said, “I have seen some students who have not had people in their lives who value and respect them make incredible advances in the program” (p. 7). Norma (p. 7) indicated, and I agree, that when students begin to see that others value them, they begin to value themselves. Margaret linked a particular student’s negative image to her sensitivity to her work performance. She said of a particularly sensitive student, “She is actually very negative about herself when she gets something wrong” (p. 13). Margaret went on to explain that Ursula (a student who was not a participant in this study), through encouragement and support, gained a more realistic view and expectation of herself and her accomplishments (pp. 12-13).
Sometimes success can lead to unrealistic expectations. Frank’s success in basic computer work led him to believe that programming was a potential next step in his learning (p. 4). Charlotte expressed that the perceptions of some students of their own capabilities need redefining. She said, “I keep telling them, you need a realistic job. And for some of them, a realistic job is a photographer of models” (p. 9). But these choices, and others like them, are not realistic choices related to their experience and abilities. Their choices are highly prestigious choices, and I believe in their minds they see such occupations as enhancing their self-esteem and their image. Norma echoed Charlotte in speaking of student motivation by saying, “We should be more active in bringing these perceptions to light so that the students can get an independent view of their level of motivation” (p. 2).

**Interpretation Based on the Literature**

The themes identified in the data collected from the students and the faculty to respond to research question 1 are generally consistent with the reviewed literature. In answering the first question, the students see success as being able to finish the program and, as a corollary to that, obtaining the skills and behaviours necessary to achieve that end. As indicated by the meaning of motivation suggested by Beder and Valentine (1990) and by Schenstead (1997), finishing the program is the primary reason why they chose to and continued to participate in the program. The ultimate goal of most of the interviewed students was to obtain paid employment, and finishing the program was the means to that end. All of the students, to varying degrees, exhibited the “wellspring of energy” in the interviews, and in the program activities mentioned by Schenstead as they worked towards their individual goals.
For example, Elizabeth (p. 7) and Oscar (p. 22) expressed this energy in both their class and especially in their work placements.

The instructors’ view of student success initially reflected that of the students in that the goal is for the students to obtain new skills, as was expressed explicitly by Charlotte (p. 2) when she stated the students have learned skills they could not do before. This perception is consistent with the building of competency as described by Prentice (2001), Beder and Valentine (1990), and Demetrion (2001) and was expected by both teachers and students. The students initially saw success as learned behaviours and skills that are concrete, such as doing their homework (John, p. 10), learning to take a bus by themselves and learning to drive (Gail, p. 10), or doing the job “better and faster” (Yasmin, p. 32). However, these expectations tended to morph from what Beder and Valentine describe as “what I hope to do” to become more of “what I hope to be.” The students expressed this attitude and growth when they used such statements as “I want to move on to the next level” (William, p. 5) and a wish to “find a job that you are going to be happy with” (Frank, p. 9). To varying degrees, they are beginning to take charge of their own learning while reflecting on their futures. This points to the presence of affective transformative learning cited by Taylor (2000), Demetrion (2001), and Prentice (2001) that coincides with an effective learning approach and instruction.

The dependent pedagogical expectations of the students as described by Knowles (1984b) are evident in the responses of students such as William (p. 15), Yasmin (p. 4), and Audrey (p. 20), whose attitudes strongly reflected that of the “dependent personality.” Their general expectation was that they would come to the
learning environment, be plied with instructions and support, and they would produce an outcome to please the instructor or supervisor. The quality of their work tended to be of less importance to them than producing an outcome itself, which they intuitively felt was enough to produce the desired reward, marks or a pass in their placement. I have found that when students feel the learning situation or environment causes too much discomfort or the support and rewards are not sufficient or timely, the students may react by reducing their effort, or they may refuse to participate at all. These reactions are consistent with Cranton’s (1992) suggestion of several possible learning paths for the transformative learner, but the clash with the dependent student’s expectations can be severe and debilitating. To a greater or lesser degree, I have found this attitude pervasive in many of the students, but more so in those who tend to be less emotionally mature.

Some students, like Isaac (p. 20) and Yasmin (p. 38), expressed their dependency by their reluctance to leave the shelter of the school environment. William (p. 3) showed this fear of not making it in the work world by saying he will return to school if that avenue fails. Taylor (2000) suggests that students have varying dispositions towards transformative learning. This is consistent with my experience and the comments of the interviewed students. However, I feel that a strong variable in their altering motivation is a reflection of their perceived or potential success of their hopes and goals. Their motivational reactions can be very situational, and “critical incidents” as described by Cranton (1992) and Taylor (2000) can be transformative, or reinforce dependence tendencies if the student fails to achieve meaningful success based on the student’s efforts and perceptions. I agree
fully with Rogers and Thorpe (1981) when they point to the necessity of a positive change in the students’ self-concept for success to be achieved.

Others, like Elizabeth (p. 6), exhibited a more transformative response, as she gained and strengthened her experience and independence throughout the individual facets of the program. Elizabeth’s success demonstrates Dewey’s “ends in view” process as cited in Demetrion (2001, p. 81). The more emotionally mature and the more transformative the student’s responses, the more likely they are to weather change and adjust their expectations as needed in their learning environment.

Demetrion’s (p. 84) observation that when students’ skills increase, their self-confidence also increases, and Hughes’s (1995) assertion that students gain “a feeling of being competitive” (p. 1) are consistent with the maturing and growing confidence of the study students (Elizabeth, p. 7; Gail, p. 10; Isaac, p. 8; Yasmin, p. 8) and with my own observations. Learning to do things on their own strengthens their independence, maturity, and sense of worth. As Norma (p. 7) pointed out, a positive self-image strengthens involvement, but weak self-images can also be strengthened with encouragement and successful involvement. However, some of the instructors (Alison, p. 2; Charlotte, p. 9; Margaret, p. 12; Scott, p. 16) strongly emphasized that the students are still maturing, and it is important the students’ image of themselves be realistic.

**Research Question 2: What factors encourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?**

The data to answer research question number 2 from the students’ perspective were provided primarily by the students under Introduction: Background Section
from questions 2, 3, and 4; from the College Background Section from questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6; from Learning questions 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9; from Placement questions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 7; from Work Placement Class questions 2, 3, and 4; and from the Learning in Academic Classes questions 1, 3, 4, 5, and 8 of the interview guide.

The data to answer research question number 2 from the instructors' perspective were primarily provided by the instructors under Introduction: Background Section from questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8; from the College Background Section from questions 3, 4, and 5; from Learning questions 3, 4, 6, and 7; and from Placement/Job Coach questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8 of the interview guide.

Major Themes That Emerged

The themes that emerged to answer research question 2 on what factors encouraged the CVP students to participate in learning activities in their academic and placement classes and in their placements were extensive and varied. The study indicated that a very strong and persistent influence on the students' motivation is that of their supportive relationships. From my experience, as they become more independent, more influence is generated by those outside of the family influence. My interpretations of the data indicate that family members, followed by instructors and counsellors are strong catalysts for participation and retention in the program. Influential family members included the mother (Audrey, p. 2; Elizabeth, p. 4; Frank, p. 4; Gail, p. 4; Oscar, p. 10) and sisters (Audrey, pp. 4,13). Frank (p. 4), in identifying who influenced his choice to come into the program, said that "it was mostly my mom. Kind of a little bit of me." Instructors and counsellors (Audrey, p. 3; John, p. 5; Isaac, p. 7; Oscar, p. 7; William, p. 3) also had a strong influence in the
students' initial participation. John (p. 5) indicated that his "old counsellor at high school" was the primary influence in his taking the program.

The instructors (Charlotte, p. 7; Ian, p. 12; Margaret, p. 6; Norma, p. 4; Scott, p. 11) also felt that the parents exerted a strong influence. Charlotte (p. 4) reported on the very high motivation of one of the students (not in the study) "who seemed driven" by internal forces. My conversations with this student strongly indicated that it was a long-time desire to please an absentee, highly successful Asian father in Hong Kong, whom he idolized. Other mentioned influences included guidance counsellors, teachers (Ian p. 12; Scott, p. 9), other students (Ian, p. 12), and no other viable options (Charlotte, p. 7). Ian summed up the influences by saying they are the "parents, teachers, and students" (p. 12), but then emphasized, "the parents, they run the show" (p. 13).

Isaac (p. 4), Oscar (pp. 4, 9), and Gail (p. 9) indicated that they knew some of their classmates in previous schools. Conversations with them and other students indicated that there were several students who were known to each other, and the bonding and influence of these relationships can be quite strong. Social interactions take place with these students both in and outside of the program. Gail (p. 9) in referring to these friends said, "We still talk and hang out and stuff." In a past conversation, one of these students indicated to me that these social events, like going to the movies, were very important to her.

Another strong influence on participating in the program is the relationships fostered with the job coach (Audrey, p. 18; Gail, p. 20) and placement supervisors (Elizabeth, p. 19; Frank, p. 17; Gail, pp. 18, 21; Isaac, p. 13; Oscar, p. 15; William, p.
Elizabeth (p. 17) described this relationship as follows: "I think my work placement is very successful right now. I get along great with my supervisor and staff." John (pp. 21, 22) and Yasmin (p. 23) tended to have weak relationships with their placement supervisors, and both struggled to do well in their placements.

The relationships and support of peers within the program can play a significant role in participation. I have found that students with similar maturity, interests, self-esteem, and sometimes gender often tend to cluster together for comfort and support. This can be a very positive motivational force if the support leans toward learning and success. Elizabeth describes the impact of strong positive ties when she is separated from her friends because of her placement. "I wish I was in the other class... I am separated from them... I miss seeing them, and they miss seeing me" (p. 22). Isaac strongly followed this model and said, "I am around people that I know are good learners. I will always be where they can help me" (p. 9). Yasmin (p. 7), referring to her relationship with other students, said, "you learn a lot from them, and they tell you what is right and what is wrong."

Consistent with Maslow's theory of a hierarchy of needs cited in Knowles (1984a, pp. 39, 96), the students' self-esteem is very much tied to their relationships. Alison (pp. 13-14) alleged, and I strongly agree, that for these students, having successful relationships is just as important for them in terms of their self-esteem as is getting a job. We both feel that even if the students do not succeed in obtaining employment, they are successful when positive relationships with their peers are an outcome of participating in the program.
The students want to have friendships (Ian, p. 17). Overall, the students need to feel accepted and that they have a place within the program and those involved in it. Alison (p. 10) said that when the students begin to feel “they are not alone, not unusual, and accepted,” it is at this point that they begin to change and grow. When there is a milieu of emerging positive relationships and the students feel part of this activity, the students are more likely to feel free to take chances and participate.

Another critical area encouraging motivation is structural support. Along with the supportive relationships from family, instructors, and work supervisors indicated above, day-to-day personal interactions and environmental conditions reinforce participation. I have found emotional support and respect are extremely important for these students, as they have much less self-esteem and confidence than many regular students. The students need to know that they are cared for and valued (Charlotte, p. 10; Ian, p. 10; Norma, p. 3). Norma (p. 9) indicated, and I fully agree, that the consequences of lack of parental involvement and interest in the success of the students leads to diminished student involvement in their own success. I believe a significant other interested in the students’ well being is crucial for the students for the recognition, implementation, and pursuit of meaningful goals. Scott pointed out that the students see those involved in the program “as very accepting and willing to work with them” (p. 8). Alison, in referring to their placement experience, said, “I always try to get them to understand this is about them” (p. 4). In the placement itself, Alison (p. 21) emphasizes the meaning and importance of a supporting and accepting environment, especially on their first work experience.
The students themselves (Audrey, p. 25; Gail, p. 2; Oscar, p. 3; William, p. 12; Yasmin, p. 11) emphasized the importance of emotional support and acceptance. Gail pointed out the importance and impact of family support and especially that of her instructor and counsellor, Margaret. She emphasized a critical period in the program when she was going through significant personal problems, saying “she just made me feel comfortable” (p. 30). William, a very sensitive young man, dramatized the importance of caring support in the workplace by saying: “Like they call you nice, not like mean. They don’t yell or anything, they just go, ‘its all right.’ Next time you will know what to do” (p. 12).

In terms of learning, Ian (p. 10) pointed to the necessity of providing a range of learning experiences to meet the learning needs. Ian pointed out that some students are used to a “transmissive environment,” and those needs should be “honoured” (p. 4). One of the strengths of the program as pointed out by Scott, and I readily agree, is that the program provides a variety of “role models” and a “wide variety of teaching styles, backgrounds, and specialities” (p. 11). This strength provides a varied opportunity for the students to be mentored and positive relationships to be established.

Several instructors (Alison, p. 1; Norma, p. 3; Scott, p. 10) pointed to the need to provide the necessary tools and materials for the students to learn. Norma identified the importance of providing assignments that “give an opportunity to succeed so that they feel a sense of accomplishment” (p. 3). Scott emphasized the importance of “getting them the material that they need in a way so that they can utilize it” (p. 10).
There is a large emphasis in the program on assistive technology. In my numeracy class, the use of a simple calculator is emphasized. I have emphasized a simple calculator because one that has more sophisticated functions can cause confusion for the students and sometimes wrong answers if the wrong function key is pressed. For a few students, the use of the calculator instead of doing the simple calculations by hand can be a little traumatic. These students can become very uncomfortable making changes to what have become for them normal ways of doing things. However, most students become accustomed to, comfortable with, and, based on my observations, much more relaxed when they rely on the quickness, accuracy, and reliability of the calculator. This occurs because it allows the students to concentrate on the content and processes of the tasks rather than on mundane calculations. In other words, they are more likely to see and operate in the big picture rather than become lost and discouraged in the details.

We are beginning to see some of the students using electronic day-timers. From my experience, their use has been very positive from a motivational perspective. The friendly, interactive responsiveness, the feeling of control, the use of a status symbol enhancing the students' self-image may all encourage their use. The electronic reminders are also a real support to students who have short-term or long-term memory limitations.

The major effect of supportive technology occurs in the computer class and in other classes which take advantage of the available computer and assistive technology. Charlotte suggested that for these students “their whole education has been impacted by their disabilities” (p. 15). Charlotte (p. 15) and Scott (p. 2) pointed
to the program’s successful use of computers and assistive technology to help motivate the students and compensate for some of their disabilities. I have experienced this while teaching English. The basic use of typing in Microsoft Word, along with the assistive program Word Q (which helps with their prediction and spelling of words), and the screen magnifiers for the visually impaired support and increase the students’ interest and confidence greatly. Many students have an aversion to using their own handwriting because of their writing clarity and limitations. The use of computer technology, such as an electronic day-timer, encourages participation by providing the ability to record needed information by tapping keys, thus overcoming writing utensil and precision dexterity difficulties, and with assistive helps such as a spelling checker. Elizabeth, in referring to the Word Q and Via Voice computer programs that help the students write, exclaimed, “They helped us spell out the words and read it to us ... I was quite impressed with it. I never experienced that before” (p. 22). Oscar said, “we had to type out stories with our head sets. It’s really good” (p. 23). With the use of these technologies helping to compensate for physical and learning deficiencies, the students can be further encouraged to investigate more productive avenues than traditional writing methods. Emphasizing the importance and response of students to accommodating technical support, Ian said, “we are constantly hearing the students say, ‘where has this been all my life?’” (p. 3).

The use of visual aids for the visually impaired encourages in-class activities (Margaret, p. 4). The instructors often use enlarged text on written notes for those who have at least some sight, and notes put on a disk for their personal computer,
and/or Brailed, with the use of an educational assistant for those more visually impaired. For those more hearing impaired, transmitters to hearing aids can be of assistance. Seating is very important for both the visually and hearing impaired, emphasizing unobstructed communication lines between the instructor and student. This is especially important for the hearing impaired, as they often tend to hide behind other students. Students use these tactics to become inconspicuous (all too effectively if the instructors are not alert) in an effort to avoid having to interact verbally, which may be very difficult and sometimes embarrassing for them to do effectively.

The learning situation can be enhanced by hands-on and visual materials. This may be especially important for learning disabled students because they tend to respond more to what they can see and do rather than to what they would otherwise need to visualize. I have successfully used learning resources such as pictures, videos, play money, and maps as learning supports. Yasmin (p. 33), who has immigrated to Canada, indicated that maps and pictures helped her to learn about Canadian places. Frank indicated the helpfulness of hands-on materials in high school and went on to say, “I like hands-on type of things. . . . It is because it is easier to pick up the material. Before I had a hard time doing that” (p. 2).

Another very important element of support for these exceptional students is that of adequate time to understand and complete learning materials and tasks. The students need enough time spent with them at an instructional level explaining the tasks and requirements of the learning exercise. As well, additional time may be needed, especially for exceptional students, for the additional benefits of an affective
transformational learning environment and the necessary connected relationships to occur. Oscar, in what he called a "suitable way," emphasized the importance to him of instructor patience, saying, "patience is what I would appreciate" (p. 18). The students need to feel there is enough time to do the required learning exercise. I have also found that some students (often those with little outside support) shy away from tasks that they feel are too large and overwhelming and tasks that they feel will consume too much of what they consider their time (usually time outside of the school schedule). Often these students are more socially mature but have a variety of outside activities that distract them from the academic agenda. These students have an attitude that is restrictive about time and learning. This attitude essentially says that any effort put into planned learning should take place in the designated planned environment, such as the classroom or workplace. Any other learning, once they leave this environment, moves to a more spontaneous happenstance occurrence. Thus there may be strong resistance from some students to doing any work outside of school unless it is of interest and meaningful to them. This attitude may be inherited from their previous school experience and perhaps from their home environment. This attitude is strongly reinforced by the students' individual interests and group subcultures, such as jobs and socializing, but it may be antagonistic to their learning endeavours and goals.

Some strategies to encourage the students to do homework can be positive. Showing the students how to plan and organize their day and work is a prerequisite for encouraging positive participatory behaviour. I have found that the use of a day-timer and encouragement to write their homework in it can be quite effective,
especially for those students who have memory difficulties. You can provide homework they are interested in and/or give rewards such as marks or free time when the tasks have been accomplished. You can encourage the students by providing homework in amounts that do not overwhelm them and at a level of difficulty that students can find manageable. Negative comments can also be an effective strategy for motivating students to do the required homework. The students can be told that their homework will be checked for completion and that their final grade will reflect their efforts. A sometimes effective but labour-intensive strategy for those students who chronically miss doing their work has been to have them in on a regular basis for supportive counselling. The students are sometimes required to sign learning contracts indicating their agreement to do their work, and the counsellor will follow up their progress on a regular basis. This strategy has proved to be very effective for some students.

Margaret (p. 24) spoke to the need for sufficient time to meet individual learning needs. Gail (p. 20) pointed out the important need for enough time to repeat tasks until they are learned. Isaac spoke of the support he found in one instructor’s class. “She helped us do it. If we didn’t understand something, she gave us the time to do it” (p. 17). I have found that the students, as they gain confidence, do like to take on larger tasks, but it is discouraging for the students (usually the slower ones or those who have more difficulties) if they feel there is not sufficient time or the task appears too daunting.

Another important element of support is instructional and supervisory feedback, both within the classroom and in the work placement. The instructors, Norma (p. 4),
Alison (pp. 22-23), and Scott (pp. 8-10, 14, 16) all emphasized the importance of constructive and timely feedback. Scott underscored this importance in saying, "When they do something right or wrong they hear about it immediately" (p. 9). Feedback can be very important to the instructor as well. Alison talked of the importance of being sensitive to student feedback through their words and actions, saying, "It's a good indicator to me of what I need to change and what I need to keep" (p. 9). On the same theme, Scott expressed that the instructors and students "all learn from each other" (p. 15).

The students (Audrey, p. 16; Frank, p. 17; John, p. 20; Oscar, p. 18; William, p. 10; Yasmin, p. 13) emphasized how important feedback is to them, both in the classroom and in the work placement. One way of providing feedback is through tests or quizzes. I generally prefer to call my tests quizzes, because the students tend to find that term less intimidating. Surprisingly, many of the students have asked for tests, generally when they feel they know the work and want to prove it to themselves and to me. As part of her learning strategies, Yasmin implied that she learns from her mistakes through the process of having tests and says, "I review it. And because we do tests. Doing tests you do [learn] a lot of things. Your mistakes" (p. 13). I have found in and out of the classroom that timely, positive, verbal feedback can be a strong motivator. Frank illustrated this effect by indicating that he is encouraged on the job "when people give me compliments on a job, like, well done. That kind of helps me wanting to help even more" (p. 17).

Another important aspect of feedback for students, especially those less mature and less competent, includes direction. Audrey expressed the comfort level she
experiences when her supervisors tell her “where to go” and “what to do” (p. 13).
That may be all they need to get going, but I have found it an important component in
initiating productive activity. For some students, when activity has been initiated, it
may be necessary to give timely stimulus and direction on a persistent basis to keep
the activity advancing. It is anticipated that eventually the students will increase their
ability for self-direction and be able to instigate and sustain productive activities on
their own initiative.

However, not all feedback is appreciated by the students, even when it is
constructive. Sometimes the students are in denial and may resist redirection.
William expressed his dislike of consistent attention in the computer class by saying,
“The teacher kept bothering me” (p. 16). William often had this reaction with other
instructors, including me, and his behaviour is not inconsistent with many
unmotivated students. Yasmin (p. 28) said her feedback from a workplace employer
was “discouraging” when she obtained negative but probably truthful and necessary
verbal feedback on her placement performance and occupational interests. As it is
important to give truthful and firm feedback, it is also beneficial during these difficult
moments to provide acceptance, encouragement, and support.

I agree fully with the view expressed by all the instructors (Alison, p. 1;
Charlotte, p. 13; Ian, p. 2; Margaret, pp. 5, 18; Norma, p. 4; Scott, p. 2) that it is
important to be flexible when responding to the requirements of the students in
providing strategies that address individual learning needs. I have found from my
own experience that the students are more likely to be engaged if I am willing to
break off the set lesson plan from time to time and respond to their enquiries that they
may see as relevant. This works best when these alternative directions can be related to past, present, and even future learning situations. For instance, we may be learning about percents, and a student may comment on his cell phone bill. We can then proceed to talk about interest, responsibility, and comparative shopping. Most of the students will become engaged and shout out their own stories and questions related to numeracy and other life situations. Coming from a workplace perspective, Alison said she tries to engage the students in learning experience with “something that will help them” (p. 1). Later, while describing a writing assignment, Alison said, “It all comes down to relevance” (p. 26). Ian stressed the need for a “range of learning experiences to meet the range of learning needs” (p. 10). Along a similar vein, Margaret (p. 5) and Norma (p. 4) stressed the need for a “variety” of experiences while making use of different teaching strategies. Margaret summed up teaching flexibility by suggesting that teachers need to strive to “teach them in a way that they can learn” (p. 18).

I cannot overemphasize the need for encouraging these students. Several instructors (Alison, p. 24; Ian, p. 10; Norma, p. 3) also placed a strong emphasis on this need. Encouragement can occur at many levels. Encouragement occurs when the students are valued and respected, which leads to the students wanting to do well (Norma, p. 3). Ian said the same thing: “They need to feel honoured and appreciated and encouraged, … That’s what I find produces the most” (p. 10). Alison (pp. 24-25) emphasized the role of encouragement leading to positive change. In getting the students to scrutinize their values, she said, “that’s what we try to look at and change when it needs changing. Hopefully to encourage them to change” (p. 24). I have
found that when they have completed a task, or made a change, the students don’t want to be ignored; they want a response to their accomplishment. In expressing similar observations, Margaret (p. 2) said that the students “look for affirmation” after completing their tasks. Overall, there is an effort to respect the students as adults (Charlotte, p. 5; Margaret, p. 7; Norma, p. 8; Scott, p. 5). It is through honouring their work and achievements that the students’ movement to greater maturity and adult responsibility is encouraged (Alison, p. 25; Ian, p. 10). Both Scott (p. 4) and Charlotte (p. 5) stated that the students will respond to the way they are treated.

Charlotte, in stating the importance of the students being challenged, emphasized that the students need to “feel like we are treating them as adults who have an ability to be challenged and rise to that challenge” (p. 5). Norma indicated that “success comes from involving them in the solutions and treating them with care and respect” (p. 8).

There were several strong areas of interest that the students identified as encouraging enthusiastic participation in the program. The first of these was the attractiveness of the program itself and many of the individual courses, especially gym and computers. Several of the students (Elizabeth, p. 2; Isaac, p. 3; Oscar, p. 9; William, p. 3; Yasmin, p. 5) expressed an overall interest in the program, especially their belief that it would provide them a better opportunity for employment. Every year, the students express enthusiasm about several of the courses. For many students, physical education, including the opportunity to work out in the fitness center, is a favourite fun activity and an opportunity to participate and compete against themselves and others in a safe and relaxing environment. It also provides the exciting opportunity to do old and new activities, on a level playing field, that they
may not have been able to do before. For others, it gives them the opportunity to show off skills and burn off energy in a way that cannot occur in a regular classroom. This extraordinary enthusiasm was expressed by Frank who said gym was his favourite activity and that this was “self-explanatory” (p. 22). Gail (p. 9) stated her reason for liking gym was because she saw it as a “social” event.

Many of the students (Audrey, p. 20; Elizabeth, p. 22; Frank, p. 22; Oscar, p. 22; Yasmin, p. 12) expressed their interest and appreciation for computers and the skills and opportunities computers gave them. Frank enthusiastically expressed his liking for computers by saying, “I want to get into the field, and it is good to know stuff that I didn’t actually know before” (p. 22). Appreciation for Word Q, a computer application that helps the students correctly identify spelling and pronunciations, was also expressed strongly (Elizabeth, p. 22; Frank, p. 12; Oscar, p. 23; Yasmin, p. 12). Yasmin expressed her pleasure in using these tools by saying that in computer class she learned “how to use the monitor, use the keyboard, and Word Q. ... I didn’t know about that. How to use the microphone” (p. 12).

The students also expressed their interest in challenging work (Elizabeth, p. 12; Frank, p. 8; Isaac, p. 5; John, p. 9). The students want challenging work, but not work that leads to defeat. These students have experienced difficulties and failure, but they have not always experienced the consistent success of learning new and challenging tasks that encourage learning. Gail (p. 7), Frank (p. 8), and John (p. 9) all expressed appreciation for work that was challenging enough to keep them interested. John expressed his lack of enjoyment in the numeracy class by explaining: “Lots of the time I couldn’t understand it. Even with the calculator” (p. 27). John was often
distracted in that class and had a great deal of difficulty remaining focused and completing his work. He would sometimes cover the work he was supposed to be doing by doing or reading other material that was of more interest to him, like reading the newspaper or a magazine. Gail expressed her difficulty with numeracy class but said “she enjoyed our math classes because they were friendly and funny” (p. 13). Some of the students (Audrey, p. 23; Elizabeth, p. 29; Isaac, p. 19; John, p. 28; Oscar, p. 25; William, p. 18) indicated very strongly their desire to obtain marks and credits and to complete the program. Not all of the students seemed to strive to reach their potential. Some (John, p. 28; William, p. 18) indicated that getting marks sufficient to pass the course was good enough. John (p. 28) summed up his less than enthusiastic attitude about completing school work by saying, it was to “complete it basically” and “to get the marks basically.”

The environment, both within the classroom and out in the workplace, was seen as having an important influence on the students, although not a decisive one, in all areas. Both the students and the instructors outlined several factors. It is seen as important that the environment be welcoming and accepting to the students (Charlotte, p. 16; Ian, p. 14; Margaret, p. 21). Ian believed that the program does this very well, and he indicated its importance by saying, “I don’t think we would be as successful as we are if we didn’t” (p. 14) welcome and accept all the students. Charlotte added to the welcoming factor by stating that the expectation that students are capable of learning is important for the student experience. She pointed out that in an atmosphere that expects “not an excuse but acceptance. ... When people are expecting them to do. Then I think that’s what maybe starts to change that motivation
a little bit” (p. 16). Of course, the environment must also continue to be supporting and respectful of the students and their work.

The physical environment can also be a factor influencing motivation. Alison observed the calming effect of light and space in the classroom. She noticed that the light coming in the windows had a calming effect on the students, but she said the students “are not aware of it” (p. 17). She also noticed that when there is sufficient space in the classroom for the students “to keep their personal space,” they also “become more relaxed … with less distractions” (p. 18). This was noticeable when recently new renovations created bigger and brighter classrooms. Alison (p. 18) also pointed out that the renovations themselves could be very distracting for the students. I had the same experience myself on several occasions when noise, and sometimes even the proximity of the workmen, would disrupt the work flow and learning of the students, especially those who had trouble concentrating even under ideal conditions. John (p. 6), who could be easily distracted, often expressed his displeasure at the disruptions the construction caused in the classroom for him. Many of the students (Elizabeth, p. 14; Frank, p. 13; Isaac, p. 9; John, p. 14; Oscar, p. 13; William, p. 15) expressed a strong desire for a calm and quiet classroom environment for learning. Elizabeth said, “I like it quiet. But I do like the people being enthusiastic, … but sometimes there can be too much hyper, and it makes me lose concentration” (p. 14).

This strong emphasis on the need for calm and quietness by the students was a surprise for me. I often find that I need to stalwartly promote a calm and quieter atmosphere in the classroom because of the loud behaviour of some of the more boisterous students. Noise tolerance varies from student to student, but there seems
to be an optimal level of noise and activity that the majority of the students are comfortable with, beyond which there is interference in the students’ concentration and learning.

Scott also expressed the need for small class sizes for these students and a “learning environment that is a conducive one, that is not too hot or too cold, not too big or not too small” (p. 15). This is consistent with my own experience with these students; wide temperature variations can be very distracting. William (p. 11) expressed very strongly that he did not like being asked to work where it was cold at his work placement. Scott iterated that “ambience and atmosphere and environment are incredibly important” (p. 16). Ian (p. 25) pointed out that some students are greatly affected by their personal surroundings. Some have “attention and distractibility issues” and should be close to the instructor for quick redirection when necessary. Gail (p. 16) voiced that she preferred a “dull” classroom because too much light in the classroom was distracting for her. Gail liked to be inconspicuous in the classroom unless she was confident about her contributions. She often would put her head down and try to hide behind other peers or a physical object, like a computer. In the interview, there was a mild tendency by Gail to be passively quiet and hide (Gail, p. 6). With her head held slightly down, I had to ask her to speak a little louder and more directly to the microphone. During the interview, Gail exhibited a defiant attitude at times, which some of the instructors had told me had troubled them. I found that if I respected her feelings and offered support while presenting my expectations, our relationship remained positive. Depending on her mood and confidence in the classroom, Gail would present a defiant frown or a more
open and accepting disposition with a reluctant smile as she looked at you. In extreme cases, Gail would miss classes or be periodically late and try and slip in without being noticed. Yet when Gail was confident, I found her outgoing and extremely helpful to others.

For those who are deaf, “sight lines” should be provided for a clear view of all instructors (Ian, p. 25). And of course, physical accommodations should be provided for those special needs students, such as the visually impaired and those in wheelchairs, so that their motivation to learn is not curtailed.

The students (Audrey, p. 6; Elizabeth, p. 5; Oscar, p. 13; Yasmin, p. 18) stressed their wanting friendly relationships with fellow students. Most of all, the classroom needs to feel and be comfortable and safe for the students. The request for this type of atmosphere and environment initially comes from the parents, said Norma (p. 4). Alison pointed out that a feeling of safety emerges when the students become aware that “they are not alone, ... that they are not unusual, and they are accepted” (pp.10-11). Alison (p. 10) felt that this allows greater latitude for the students to mature and become more independent. Scott emphasized that a safe atmosphere can provide the opportunity to give permission for the students to “be silly ... have fun ... and work hard” (p. 14). The students should also feel free and safe enough to be able to make mistakes. Of course, it is very important that the students should feel safe from any intimidating circumstances in the classrooms (like aggressive student criticisms that tend to put them down) so that they feel safe enough to take risks (Ian, p. 2; Scott p. 14). It is also very important that the instructor be seen as willing and able to protect students from any aggressive behaviours of other students.
Several students (Audrey, p. 6; Elizabeth, p. 5; Gail, p. 30; Isaac, pp. 4, 9; Oscar, p. 12) emphasized various aspects and the importance of safety in learning situations. Isaac spoke of the importance of the surroundings being comfortably familiar when he said, “It is easier now that I know where everything is” (p. 4). Isaac was very organized and liked to protect his work space. He approached his work in a very organized way and tended to have his work completed as neatly and accurately as he could. Isaac didn’t mind small intrusions into his workspace by his close friends, but he was most comfortable when he had control of his immediate surroundings. In speaking of organizing an outing with his friends, Isaac said, “You have to be specific. ... You have to say where you want to meet and make sure that people will be there on time” (p. 6). He also spoke of his sensitivity to peer and instructor criticism when he said, “If you are asking a question, they respect your answer, and it doesn’t matter if it is right or wrong” (p. 9). Elizabeth expressed her need for feeling safe and being motivated by saying, “The staff and students were friendly, helpful, and nice, and I wanted to keep on going” (p. 5). Instructors can set the framework for a safe atmosphere. Safety and comfortableness were provided by Margaret while counselling Gail, who articulated, “Something happened in the family and she just made me feel comfortable” (p. 30). It is especially important for these students to feel they are learning in a safe and friendly environment, because they are already struggling with heightened anxiety and insecurities.

Many of the students (Elizabeth, p. 23; Frank, p. 19; Gail, p. 9; John, p. 5; Oscar, p. 3; William, p. 2; Yasmin, p. 2) stressed that having fun while learning or working was important to them, and it seemed to encourage them in their work. John
(p. 5), who was one of the less motivated students in the class, said that he stayed in the program because it was “fun” and “it gave me like an adventure to do” (p. 9). This is consistent with my experience with those less motivated. If they can hook into activities that are of interest to them, their motivation can increase substantially. William (p. 2), who at times seemed extremely unmotivated in academic classes and in his placements, said that gym was a “fun” activity, and he would come alive in gym, where his interest and confidence lay. Learning situations that are not normally motivating for certain students can become of more interest if presented in a pleasant atmosphere. Gail indicated this to me, saying she “enjoyed our math classes because they were friendly and funny” (p. 13); but in referring to her past math experience, she indicated, “I refused to do it. I hate doing that. I just never liked it” (p. 24). The instructors (Alison, p. 3; Margaret, p. 3; Scott, p. 10) expressed the importance of fun in their approach to teaching and learning activities. Margaret uses game play to stimulate interest while learning. She said, “It’s fun and they want to be winners. … Yes, they want to win” (p. 4). Alison uses humour to engage the students and said, “I find when I use humour with them their interest peaks” (p. 3). Scott said, “I like to have fun with the students” (p. 10). He (p. 10) indicated he uses fun within a “respectful atmosphere” to encourage the students to contribute to the learning activities. Other instructors (Norma and Charlotte) have a more serious teaching presentation approach and do not mention the use of fun in their teaching styles. Norma (p. 5) said she uses a “relaxed but demanding tone” in the classroom. Charlotte said, “I always approach the students in that I am sort of like a boss. So I try to play that role all the time” (p. 9). Charlotte often jokes with me that some of
the students affectionately label her the "sergeant." I have observed that most of the students appreciate and respond well to Norma’s and Charlotte’s businesslike approaches and dry humour, especially when the students feel there is a genuine caring that goes with sternness. From my perspective of the two styles, there is a tendency (but not an absolute) for those students who are more highly motivated to lean more towards a businesslike learning style (i.e., pedagogical approach, being told what to do, and outcomes driven) and tend to appreciate this more direct approach. Those who are less motivated (but often more socially aware and brighter) and unsure of their place in the program tend to be drawn to and be more receptive of the more open-ended approach that reflects some of their interests and that they may perceive to be more comfortable and less threatening in its demands.

All the activities and supports that reinforce participation are bound together and energized by the enthusiasm of both the students and instructors. Scott (p. 2) referred to this as the "energy level" developed in the classroom and program on a daily basis by the instructors and students through a variety of activities. Scott (p. 8) gave one example of enthusiasm and energy that came from an outstanding student with substantial preexisting medical conditions who consistently energized and lifted up the entire gym class with a tenacity that comparatively outpaced the efforts of both students and staff. My own experience is that following the lead of students in new directions, such as student debates, has provided high energy levels both in and out of the classroom.
Interpretation Based on the Literature

Two overall themes emerged to answer the question of what factors encouraged the students to participate, and they are generally consistent with the reviewed literature. The first theme is that of the immense importance of supportive relationships. The second is the necessity of varied but encompassing structural support.

As indicated by Corley and Taymans (2001), Demetrion (2001), and Mpofo and Watson (1999), significant others play an important part in motivating individual learners. For the participants in this study, family members had the most influential voice, followed closely by instructors and counsellors. The instructors in particular singled out the strong influence of parents. The presence and need for supportive relationships was quite intense and far more extensive than I had expected. The extensive support of siblings (usually sisters) was a surprise, as was the minor mention of fathers and male siblings. Although from my experience they do play a role and exert an influence, and often a final one, the direct impact of the influence of familial males seemed less than that of the females. The reason may be that females bear more of the nurturing and protective role and perhaps the time and patience needed to support these students for the extended periods of time needed. I suspect the father's influence is less overt, but in some cases may be just (if not even more) as intense. I suspect this because in some cases, in casual conversations with the students in their making decisions, the influence of the father was expressed, even though there has been no direct contact with the school. Hanni, a student who was not interviewed in the study, had a very successful absentee father who lived out of
the country for most of the year and who Hanni strongly admired. In my conversations with Hanni, it was quite apparent that any major decisions and motivations in regard to his education and social activities were strongly influenced by his father. However, in conversations with other students, there seemed to be no reference to father figures, leaving me to suspect that there was little or no paternal influence. In my literature research, I found no writings that provided data on the differences of and paternal influence on young adults.

Another surprise for me was the long standing interpersonal ties that some of the students (Gail, p. 9; Isaac, p. 4; Oscar, p. 4) had with peers from previous school experiences and that continued to give participatory support. Coming from special needs backgrounds and similar locations, they had intertwined educational histories for several years prior to coming to the College. Support from peers was very important, especially at the emotional level as expressed by Elizabeth (p. 22). Motivation emanating from this emotional support provided the basis for practical help and support in their work tasks and learning, as was expressed by Isaac (p. 9) and Yasmin (p. 7). This is consistent with Taylor (2000) and Prentice (2001), who say classroom relationships can have a substantive impact.

Educational instructors and counsellors within (Audrey, p. 3; Isaac, p. 7; John, p. 5; Oscar, p. 7; William, p. 3) and outside (John, p. 5) the program provided a strong influence on initial and subsequent student participation and retention. The counselling was crucial for some students, like Gail (p. 9). The job coach was very influential for some students (Audrey, p. 18; Gail, p. 20), and the supervisor for others (Elizabeth, p. 17). Babchuk and Courtney (1995) point out that where personal
influence is lacking, those in most need tend to refrain from participating. Those who had poor supervisory relationships (John, p. 21; Yasmin, p. 23) struggled in their placements and also tended to have superficial relationships with “significant others” and with peers in the College environment. This is consistent with Taylor’s finding of the importance of positive teacher-student relationships. Beder and Valentine’s (1990) argument that using the learning environment as a “diversion” when supported by others is a motivating force, is consistent with the perceptions of students like John and William who did not come into the program highly motivated but participated when interest was shown in them and with support and encouragement. Prentice (2001, p. 9) indicates that unity and high faculty interest in the welfare of the students leads to greater motivation. The consistency of the instructors’ comments on the importance of faculty enthusiasm and acceptance of students, as well as my own observations, support Prentice’s view.

The data suggest that structural support plays a very important role in motivation and retention. This includes the environmental conditions such as the physical and learning structures as well as the personal interactions that take place within those structures. The instructors (Alison, p. 1; Charlotte, p. 13; Ian, p. 2; Margaret, pp. 5, 18; Norma, p. 4; Scott, p. 2) emphasized that it is important to be flexible with the students and their learning needs. Ian (p. 10) pointed to the necessity of providing a “range of learning experiences” to meet individual learning needs. His comment is consistent with Demetron’s (2001) view, when he pragmatically suggests a “variety of approaches” are necessary. Ian (p. 10) would agree that such approaches would include both a “transmissive” or an effective
(Beder & Valentine, 1990) pedagogical strategy when necessary. As expressed by Corley and Taymans (2001), many students live with a legacy of the pedagogical approaches, and the CVP students, because of their disabilities, seem especially dependent in this area. Students like Audrey (p. 2) and Yasmin (p. 5) tended towards wanting to be “recipients of knowledge” as expressed by Howell (2001, p. 3) and demonstrated the “authority dependence” pointed out by Brookfield (1990, p. 45).

Scott (p. 11) indicated that the program offers a variety of “role models” and “teaching styles,” and Charlotte (p. 16) emphasized that the students are confronted with the expectation that they can learn.

The classroom experience, when combined with the supportive counselling by instructors and the job-related coaching by Alison, seemed to create a strong learner-centered environment consistent with that described by Knowles (1984a). However, CVP students do not always have the largess of their own experience and knowledge that other adult students do, as described by Howell (2001), and that, combined with feelings of dependency and cognitive disabilities, may limit the transformative experience. Based on my interpretations of the data in the study and on my personal experience, I disagree with Howell (p. 2) who asserts that all adult students take their education seriously, as I feel some diversion students and dropouts from the program have not done so, but I do agree with him that many of the students are inadequately prepared for the college learning environment.

Several of the instructors (Alison, p. 1; Charlotte, p. 15; Norma, p. 3; Scott, p. 10) pointed to the need for adequate tools and materials, including assistive technology, as necessary for the students to learn. This is consistent with Barr and
Tagg (1995), Howell (1971), and Prentice (2001), who advocate for a relevant curriculum that takes in the needs and interests of the students. Yasmin (p. 33) and Frank (p. 2) expressed their gratitude when their interests were able to be expressed in their learning experiences. Taylor (2000) indicates that there is a need for adequate time in the transformative learning process for the students to process the relevant learning material. This is especially important for students with exceptionalities relating to learning difficulties and physical limitations. The students in this study were aware of this need and strongly expressed the need for adequate time to digest and complete their work. I believe this could be a reaction to the frustration they have felt in past learning experiences when they could not keep up with others, especially their peers. This is in agreement with Mpofu and Watson’s (1999) findings that former learning experiences and Corley and Taymans’ (2001) suggestion that continuous academic difficulties can stifle motivation.

Corley and Taymans (2001) emphasize the importance of “feedback” to the learner in order to give support to their “areas of need,” to help them take ownership for their learning, and to increase motivation. Both instructors (Alison, pp. 22-23; Norma, p. 4; Scott, pp. 8-10, 14, 16) and students (Audrey, p. 16; Frank, p. 17; John, p. 20; Oscar, p. 18; William, p. 10; Yasmin, p. 13) effectively agreed and strongly conveyed the need for timely and effective feedback to support and sustain participation and enhance motivation. Taking feedback a step further, it was found to be crucial for both the students (Yasmin, p. 13) and instructors (Alison, p. 9) in an affective (Brookfield, 1990) reciprocal learning environment.
All the instructors emphasized the need for student encouragement through valuing and respecting the students as well as their work, to strengthen motivation. Ian (p. 10) spoke of the need to “honour” and “appreciate” the students, and Alison (p. 24) pointed out that encouraging the students to look at their “values” and make necessary changes was important. Appropriate feedback (Alison, p. 24; Margaret, p. 2) and involvement (Norma, p. 8) in reflective practices were seen as important for change at an emotional or affective level. This is in agreement with Taylor (2000), who stresses that affective learning involves emotions in order for meaning to take place.

The vocational aspects of the program itself, with its integration of academics and workplace experiences, was found to be an attractive and influencing factor in recruiting and retaining the students (Elizabeth, p. 2; Isaac, p. 3; Oscar, p. 9; William, p. 3; Yasmin, p. 5). This is consistent with Prentice’s (2001) argument that the integration of academic, vocational instruction, coupled with the learners’ interests, strengthens motivation.

The learning environment was emphasized by the students and instructors as being important in encouraging motivation, which is generally consistent with the literature that I reviewed for this study. The instructors emphasized that initially the environment should be welcoming and accepting (Charlotte, p. 16; Ian, p. 14; Margaret, p. 21) and have the expectation that these students can be successful (Charlotte, p. 16). The importance of the students feeling that they can achieve is strongly supported by several researchers, such as Corley and Taymans (2001), Rogers and Thorpe (1981), and Demetrion (2001). Hughes (1995) adds that setting
higher vocational objectives will encourage motivation. Charlotte (p. 5) also supported this view in expressing the importance of encouraging the students to meet higher challenges, as did several students (Elizabeth, p. 12; Frank, p. 8; Isaac, p. 5; John, p. 9) who expressed a strong desire for challenging work.

The students in this study expressed a desire for a comfortable and safe environment. They described this as "calm and quiet" (Elizabeth, p. 14; Frank, p. 13; Isaac, p. 9; John, p. 14; Oscar, p. 13; William, p. 15), familiar (Isaac, p. 4; John, p. 6), "friendly, helpful, and nice" (Elizabeth, p. 5), fun (Elizabeth, p. 23; Frank, p. 19; Gail, p. 9; John, p. 5; Oscar, p. 3; William, p. 2; Yasmin, p. 2), and scaffolded with supportive counselling (Gail, p. 30). The instructors also expressed the need for the students to feel secure (Alison, p. 10; Norma, p. 4; Scott, p. 14) and felt it could be expressed through appropriate "light and space" (Alison, p. 17), a conducive learning environment, and small class sizes (Scott, p. 15), with the freedom to make mistakes (Scott, p. 14) and accommodation for special physical and learning needs (Ian, p. 25). These findings are in strong agreement with Demetrion (2001), Howell (2001), Knowles (1984b), and Wlodkowski (1985), who all emphasize the importance of a safe, accepting learning environment.

**Research Question 3: What factors discourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?**

The student perspective data to answer research question number 3 were provided primarily by the students under Introduction: Background Section questions 2, 3, and 4; from the College Background Section questions 1, 4, and 5; from Learning questions 3, 4, 5, and 8; from Placement questions 2, 3, 4, and 5; from
Work Placement Class questions 2, 3, and 4; and from the Learning in Academic Classes questions 2, 3, 4, 5, and 8.

The data to answer research question number 3 from the faculty perspective were provided primarily by the instructors under Introduction: Background Section questions 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8; the College Background Section questions 1, 2, 4, and 5; Learning questions 2, 4, 5, and 7; and the Placement/Job Coach questions 3, 4, 5, 6, and 8.

**Major Themes That Emerged**

There were many factors identified by the instructors and students that they thought could discourage the CVP students from participating in learning activities.

The first of these are the physical disabilities. On the surface, the physical disabilities present obstacles, sometimes substantial obstacles, to functioning in a learning environment. However, with appropriate personal and technological support, I have observed these students often come to life in their learning surroundings. I have observed in several classes visually impaired students, with supportive computer laptops and specialized software, who function enthusiastically and successfully with other students in most of the program learning activities, including gym. Those in wheelchairs or those who have other physically limiting disabilities also often respond enthusiastically when given the opportunity to participate. However, I have also noticed that when these students are waiting for their accommodations, such as a laptop, their disposition and participation can substantively diminish if they do not have the means to communicate to participate effectively.
Students do not always disclose their disabilities when they apply to and enter the program. This may be because they fear they will not be accepted if they do, or they may not recognize what some of their disabilities are and that they can be accommodated. The program does go to great lengths to provide support for any known needs. However, the instructor may find out only later “that a student is deaf in one ear and may have been presenting that ear to you all semester” (Ian, p. 2). In trying to hide such disabilities from the instructors and other students, such students expend much of their energy and effort in that endeavour rather than in participation and learning. Charlotte expressed that the students’ motivation and much of their education has been affected by their disabilities. She stated that her whole driving force is to increase motivation by “using the technology to help compensate” (p. 15).

Developmentally delayed students of varying abilities may have learning difficulties, but these difficulties are not necessarily a hindrance to motivation either in the workplace or in the classroom. Scott pointed out that these students are often “marked as slow learners” (p. 2), and the response from society has been to lessen expectations of them. I believe as a result the students may have come to believe in these lower than necessary expectations, which has hindered their achievable capacities. Like other students, some come very highly motivated and want to succeed in all they try, while others (usually only a few) show a lack of interest in learning in any situation. Charlotte (p. 11) described two such cognitively delayed individuals (not interviewed in the study) who had different responses to learning. Kimberly was lethargic and quite immature and took a long time to show consistent interest in any meaningful learning progression. My observation of Kimberly was
that she was streetwise and behaviourally highly aggressive in protecting her turf, which got her into trouble on more than one occasion. However, when she obtained some success in her academic and workplace environments, her interest and motivation towards success increased, as did her self-esteem, maturity, and independence. The other student, Wendy, who has Down syndrome, came into the program strikingly mature in some social responses and highly motivated to succeed. Wendy came from a more sheltered environment, presented a strong work ethic in her academics, enjoyed strong educational assistance and parental support, but struggled to keep on task in the workplace, while continuing to need consistent external support.

Other disabilities presented in the classroom are emotional or psychological disorders (Charlotte, p. 10; Norma, pp. 1, 8; Ian, p. 5). Some may be too severe for effective learning in the program, such as severe autism, behavioural disorders, or very high anxiety, and these students have had to drop out of the program. However, sometimes behaviour that initially prohibited functioning and learning in the classroom has been alleviated successfully through counselling and support, which has ultimately led to student success and graduation. Margaret aptly expressed the difficulty some students have with their disability which can lead to insecurity and “hopelessness” (p. 17). What is surprising is that when support, whether personal or technological, is put in place, many of these students respond quickly in a very upbeat and eager manner to learning. It appears to me that they want to be a part of the social and learning process and want to take part in contributing.
Sometimes compounding their cognitive and learning disabilities, students can exhibit behavioural difficulties, which can be of a minor or major nature. Norma expressed the importance of identifying the “behaviours that are stopping them from being better students … and help them face these issues” (p. 1). An example of such a student was Jeremy, a Down syndrome student who did not participate in the study, who struggled with very immature peer associations and impulsive behaviours that severely disrupted his relationships with peers and instructors. Much time and effort were expended on these dysfunctional behaviours, and he still showed very little interest in succeeding in either his academic or work environments. Although he was encouraged and supported with consistent help through counselling and the use of a behavioural contract, Jeremy’s behaviour and motivation exhibited little improvement, and he was required to withdraw from the program. When faced with these types of behavioural issues, students need reasons to change and need to choose to change.

Medical difficulties may prevent students from attending enough classes to succeed (Norma, p. 8). The variety of issues presented in this study and in my experience have varied from tiring easily to blood transfusions. However, rarely have I found these issues reduce the students’ motivation to learn. If anything, the opportunity to participate seems to intensify when these students realize how precious that opportunity is. Scott (p. 8) illustrated that with his reference to Henry, a student not in this study, who has a myriad of serious chronic medical conditions, whose attitude and motivation were to get the most out of the program and especially those
activities in gym. His attitude amazed and motivated both the staff and the students in his appreciation and celebration of life.

A major hindrance to higher levels of motivation in the CVP students is their feelings of discouragement. Purkey and Novak (1996, pp. 193-197) identify a long list of “inviting” and “disinviting” comments, behaviours, and environments that markedly influence learners. The responses of the participants in this study reflect this impact. Negative labelling, putdowns, rejection, and attacks on their self-identity have been significantly prevalent in the lives of many CVP students. These attacks have often left deep emotional scars and poor motivational attitudes, contributing to deep feelings of discouragement for many of the students. This disposition may not be immediately apparent, but as you spend time with them in learning situations, you see the low countenances and lack of perseverance. Margaret (p. 22) stated she has found that some students are still very sensitive about their previous experiences in special needs classes. Ian said that when the students feel discouragement, they are not going to progress, and even with encouragement, they still may not learn. He stated that “you’ve got to be careful that your language and your approach are at their level ... without talking down to them” (Ian, p. 24). Margaret (p. 18) acknowledged this difficulty by saying the CVP students imply by their attitudes that “I am already stupid. I can never do it.” Margaret went on to say that to overcome this attitude, it is important to “teach them in a way that they can learn.” Alison also stated that two of the hardest handicaps for the students to overcome are those of “rejection” (p. 15) from past negative experiences in school and “overindulgence” (p. 15), usually from the home. She sees the result as “totally retarding them, ... fixed in a time and period
that they can’t let go” (p. 15), which prevents them from learning from their mistakes and moving forward. Of the two hindrances, overindulgence may be the most damaging, because it tends to continue from the parents, hindering the student from relying on their own resources. Elizabeth expressed the hurt of many students when she said, “The only time I was negative ... was because of teasing and everything” (p. 10). And again, she pointed to the humiliation that many students have felt and the negative effect on participation efforts by stating, “I didn’t like the sports we were playing, and I was always picked last” (p. 27). Oscar (p. 8) expressed missing his friend Marcus, who was a higher functioning student, and wondered why he left the program. In the few conversations I had had with Marcus, I believe he just couldn’t stand being labelled and in a class, with slower functioning students and not in what he wanted to be in, which he would see as a regular program.

A major hindrance to students reaching their learning potential is the exhibited behaviour of learned helplessness. Charlotte said that some parents “have been advocating for their kids so long that they [students] are used to letting somebody else run with the ball” (p. 15). This dependent behaviour, now often through neglect or manipulation on the students’ part, encourages others to do activities for the student that they are capable of and should be doing for themselves. In the end, it interferes with the normal growth towards independence and maturity. Scott’s explanation was that these students “get spoon-fed a lot,” and they are eventually seen by themselves and others as “exceptional or learning disabled” (p. 12). He went on to say that this changes their “mind set, ... and that of the system,” effectively changing even how parents and teachers talk to the students, creating an atmosphere of dependence. This
leads to a tendency to help and shelter these students too much, in effect taking their responsibility from them. Ian emphasized this in pointing out the importance of not doing too much for the students "to make sure the students are doing what they can" (p. 11). Margaret related this situation to a feeling of "hopelessness" (p. 17) for the student in their own abilities to be able to work through their personal problems. I have observed in these situations that they tend to pass the responsibility of the activity on to others, often blaming them if the desired end is not reached. In a work placement, if the student fails to complete an activity, there is a tendency to blame the supervisor or someone else rather than their own inactivity. Scott gave the example of Chris, who is not a student in this study, "who has learned how to coast, ... and how to work the system" (p. 7). He could be quite creative in skipping classes and not handing in his work and be even more creative in assigning blame to circumstances and others rather than himself. Scott also gave the example of Winola, who is also not a student in this study, who when having difficulty in her workplace, attempted to bring in her parents to gain support for her inadequate behaviour. Scott said: "That interference from parents is literally preventing the student from learning" (p. 12). Scott emphasized, "The ones who are successful are the ones who become more independent" (p. 12).

Sometimes the behaviour of students towards effective participation can be self-destructive. Negative attitudes such as a "chip on their shoulder" (Alison p. 14) make it very hard for the student to change direction. Charlotte (p. 14) expressed the difficulties for students' learning when they think they know it all and resist instruction and the use of assistive technology. She reported these students tend to do
less well than those who often have much less ability. The image of competency they harbour can be far from the reality of their abilities thus they have difficulty admitting their limitations.

Denial about their learning difficulties can be a problem for many students. Isaac (pp. 8-9), although admitting he had difficulty reading and copying text, emphatically denied having any disabilities that affected his learning. Likewise, John (p. 13) denied having any disabilities despite struggling in the academic classes and having consistent difficulties in his work placements. When confronted with these difficulties, the students often use denial along with not taking responsibility for their actions. John, when admitting he “crashed the server” (p. 19), shrugged his shoulder when asked why. My knowledge of the incident indicated that he had refrained from taking responsibility when confronted by his supervisor and job coach, ultimately leading to failure in the placement. This situation was one of a series of incidents, before and during the program, which John (pp. 12, 17-19) described as failures but had difficulty taking full ownership for. Margaret pointed out how difficult this attitude and pattern of behaviour is to break by clarifying that the students feel “I am already doing bad, and I have heard it all my life” (p. 5).

A major attitudinal difficulty, especially with some of the more capable CVP students, is seeing their being in the CVP as a stigma rather than as an opportunity. It is their belief that they are more capable and skilful than they demonstrate either in their testing or class learning activities. In their heart, they want to be in a more socially acceptable program, often the General Arts and Science program, and their motivation in the CVP suffers. Charlotte, in discussing and expressing her concern
for the fate of a particular group of these students said, "They came and had the impression in their mind that they could do better than CVP. So they didn't stick in the pond because they wanted to go and try other waters, where they drowned" (p. 8). She went on to say that these failing students generally don't come back to the CVP because they would see that as a "double failure" (p. 8) and undoubtedly more humiliating. In my experience and in discussions with my colleagues about similar students, we have noted that those who failed to make the grade in other programs generally have more motivation in ours. We believe this is because these students have seen the other side of the fence and how difficult it can be, and they appreciate the opportunity to be successful in the CVP.

The students bring to the program a myriad of personal and learning disabilities that affect their ability to concentrate, decipher, and learn the variety of skills presented in the classroom and the workplace. In their interviews, several of the students (Frank, p. 11; Isaac, p. 8; Oscar, p. 13; Victoria, p. 18; Yasmin, p. 16) identified learning disabilities incorporating reading and writing limitations as those most prevalent. This is consistent with my experience in the classroom and the results of the Canadian Adult Achievement Test (CAAT B) testing before they start the program. I have found this limitation in particular very discouraging for these students and a definite emotional hindrance to their expressing themselves in this manner. Compounding and muddying some students’ literate abilities are those students who also struggle with English as a second language. This difficulty was identified by Yasmin (p. 15), whose second language was French and third language was English. As well, although not expressed in the interviews, it has been my
experience that the lack of experience in Canadian culture along with the English language can bring misinterpretations as the students filter the learning through their primary culture.

Verbal and cognitive expression can also pose difficulties for some students. Gail (p. 14) mentioned that she was shy and that she was not confident in her verbal abilities. She, like Oscar (p. 13), who celebrated his success over stuttering, reflects the anxiety of many of the students when they are called upon to express themselves verbally. Others, (Elizabeth, p. 12; John, p. 2; Yasmin, p. 25) expressed or implied that their cognitive shortcomings were hindering their learning attempts. Elizabeth (p. 12) courageously acknowledged her Asperger Syndrome disability (a developmental neurobiological disorder that exhibits autistic-like behaviours and marked deficiencies in social and communication skills), a brave admission, and generally not quickly disclosed by these students. Most of the students, especially those whose disability is not quickly apparent, do not readily admit or discuss their cognitive limitations. However, when the students feel safe, they will often admit that they do not understand what they are trying to learn (Gail, p. 13; Yasmin, p. 36). That is why criticism and ridicule by other students, and certainly by instructors, needs to be aggressively avoided.

Surprisingly, I found that some students (e.g., John, pp. 2, 29) willingly admitted to having a poor memory. They often do this even if they will not readily admit to any other disability. I believe it has to do with a greater social acceptance and acknowledgement of that limitation by other members of society. However, some students (e.g., John, p. 13; William p. 7) did not readily admit to having any
other kind of disability. One of the students this year (who was not interviewed in this study) refused to admit to having a clearly visible limp and arm disability. It is a huge embarrassment for them and one that I suspect has caused them a great deal of pain throughout their life, especially, but not exclusively, with peers who do not have such disabilities and resulting limitations.

The work itself can be tied to the students’ motivational response towards its avoidance or completion. The students may see the work in a variety of ways from being boring to being stimulating and a fun activity. Margaret pointed out that several students left the program early because they were embarrassed about being in it and felt it would be “too easy ... but their marks wouldn’t reflect it was too easy” (p. 7). Some students don’t quit but react to program demands by refusing to do the required work. Gail, in reflecting on the reaction of many students to expectations that they feel are too difficult, expressed her reaction by saying, “I don’t do it” (p. 13). Audrey indicated that if she is presented with a learning situation that involves unsatisfactory peer relationships, she “will not participate” (p. 11). Some of the students (Elizabeth, p. 12; Frank, p. 12; Gail, p. 29) indicated that they would like work that is challenging. Frank said, “I could have had a little faster pace” (p. 12). At the same time, some students (Gail, p. 3; Isaac, p. 19; Oscar, p. 23; William, p. 9; Yasmin, p. 36) said they would quickly let you know if the work were too challenging. Usually it was individual assignments or subjects that the students seemed to be most adverse to, rather than learning in general. Gail (p. 3) struggled with numeracy, a long-time adversary, while Oscar (p. 23) had difficulty with some English assignments. At the same time, Gail said some assignments were “too easy”
(p. 29), but she “liked it like that for certain subjects” (p. 29). This suggests she did not want too much of a challenge.

Some students expressed a dislike for particular subjects. Although most students were anxious to get to the gym, some (Elizabeth, 27; Isaac, p. 18) expressed their displeasure at this activity. At times it was just an aspect of a class the student did not like. I have observed that some of the students, like John, prefer to go to the fitness center rather than be involved in competitive sports in the gym. Usually, the aversion to the subject has to do with the difficulty of that subject for the student, but difficult experiences in earlier years may also elicit strong negative feelings. This was true for Gail, who had some difficulty with numeracy (she was more capable than she thought), but she expressed an earlier trauma by explaining, “I hate doing that. I just never liked it. My dad used to force me” (p. 24). Alison found that similar types of emotional barriers impede the students’ progress in their placements. She stated that it “keeps them very fixed, because they are very fixated in a time and period where they cannot let go” (p. 16). Margaret reiterated this concept when she talked of past personalities and experiences affecting unmotivated students. She said of these students, “they were stuck in a certain mind set, that no matter what I said, I sounded like a parent or their former high school teachers, and they didn’t want to be there” (p. 16).

But experience which has created such rigid mind sets about how one should learn, which many of these students harbour, can interfere substantially with their learning. Yasmin said she didn’t learn very much in her “Attitude Counts” class because “we didn’t finish all of the book” (p. 16). From what I have observed, many
of the students have found a narrow, but for them effective, repetitive way of learning. Changing from this predefined formula is difficult for them, as is most learning. Many students have told me that they do not like doing verbal presentations, although they are usually very proud of their efforts when they succeed. Yasmin expressed that practicing interview and telephone skills was helpful to her, but said of a presentation exercise, “I don’t like these projects, talking in front of people” (p. 30). Alison (p. 27) expressed that students will refrain from participating in a particular activity if it involves writing because of their difficulty with writing and spelling.

Some students (Gail, pp. 12, 28; Oscar, p. 25; Yasmin, p. 22) may complain of being bored when the tasks do not present enough of a challenge or if the work is of little interest to them. Gail said, “If it is not interesting, then I think it is really boring, and I don’t do it” (p. 12). Because the work placements are usually entry-level positions and the students’ capabilities are demonstratively limited, the students are often given menial tasks. Yasmin’s displeasure in such a situation is expressed in her lack of effort when she says, “I didn’t really do much there because it is so boring … I don’t appreciate it” (p. 22). Finding meaningful and challenging work placements that do not overwhelm the students is a real challenge for the job coach. Often, as a result of their illnesses and/or disabilities, some of the students have low energy levels and diminished stamina. As with many other students in the College, activities such as staying out or up too late also brought on early fatigue. Several students (Elizabeth, p. 25; Oscar, p. 24; Yasmin, p. 20) described periods of being tired and having low activity levels, and many other students have told me how tired they are
after learning situations. Oscar, who worked intently at whatever he was doing, referred to being tired when he said that “whenever you have to write or read, or do this or whatever, that kind of gives you a challenge of a time” (p. 24). Working can be hard for them, and when you struggle with disabilities, the effort required can become more intense, especially when they may have less energy to begin with.

Another factor contributing to poor motivational levels is the fear of making a mistake and presenting a poor performance. Charlotte expressed that the false “image” (p. 14) the students sometimes have of their abilities prevents them from taking advantage of learning opportunities. Margaret (pp. 17, 20) also expressed that the disabilities themselves hinder the students from more actively trying to participate. My experience in the classroom has shown time and again that disabilities and limitations that are readily seen or heard in the class environment are attempted to be hidden by the students. Thus a student with a stutter will be reluctant to answer a question, and a student with a writing disability will often be reluctant to do any substantial writing.

Many of the students (Audrey, p. 15; Elizabeth, pp. 15, 19; Frank, p. 16; Isaac, pp. 9-10; Oscar, p. 17; William, p. 11) expressed their concerns and fear about making mistakes. Audrey (p. 15) is so sure she will make a mistake that, rather than take the initiative when working, she will always wait for instructions. She summed up her fear of failure by saying, “Because if I do it on my own, then one of my supervisors will see it and they will tell me that I am doing it wrong” (p. 15). This is a typical fear, at some level, of most of the students in the program. William iterated how past negative experiences can engender this fear of failure. In referring to these
experiences, he said he has been “sometimes embarrassed because people are looking at you, especially if the instructor is yelling, everyone is looking at me” (p. 11).

Frank, who outwardly presented confidence in and out of the classroom, repeatedly stressed in the interview his desire not to make mistakes (pp. 6, 8, 10, 16, 17). He said, “I make sure what I am doing” (p. 16) and “I want to do it. I want to make it right. If I don’t do it [right], then its wrong … I want to make it right. I would rather do something right than something wrong” (p. 17). Frank, who would sit at the back of the class and a little away from less mature students, would pick his moments to express his views. It seemed to be his way of coping with being in what he would consider a special needs class and controlling the exposure of his weaknesses. Like many of the CVP students, Frank preferred hands-on materials over the complications of dealing with people. When Frank talked of working with young students in a class, he expressed, “They are ok,” but when he talked of working with and hooking up computers in the same classroom, he beamed and said enthusiastically, “I was learning how to use a program, a programming language” (p. 5).

Ian pointed out the problem of students focussing on liking or disliking an instructor and relating this to their like or dislike of a subject. This may hinder the learning and progress of the student. The result, as expressed by Ian, can be that “they perform in one class and not in another” (p. 6).

Peer influence can have an impact on the students’ participation in the program (Alison, p. 7). Scott (p. 9) felt that for some students, the large numbers of students (upwards of 25 in a class in the first semester) may be a deterrent to some of the students’ motivation. Some students are definitely distracted when they are sitting
too close to their peers, and the noise level tends to be higher. Norma (p. 5) pointed out the very real problem of the large range of abilities at the cognitive and academic levels. These abilities can range from a grade 4 level to early high school. Although the students are loosely divided into two different classes based on their academic abilities, the differences in each class can still be substantial. As well, those with similar cognitive, emotional, and social abilities will often isolate themselves from those with differing abilities and lifestyles. This can pose a problem for positive group interaction and topic discussion, as interests and abilities to interact differ.

As an extension of student incompatibilities, Ian pointed out that there are problems when students do not get along. In some cases, when they “do not work well together, they have to be separated,” said Ian (p. 25). And Margaret related their negative attitudes and “disrespectful behaviour” (p. 16) to their poor performance in their class work and in their work placements. From my program experience, I have observed that these attitudes often spill over into negative behaviour with other students, instructors, and sometimes with work supervisors in the workplace, disrupting the students’ learning experience. Scott pointed out the impact of “group ethos” (p. 7) on some students, which can be of a positive or negative nature. These relationships can be quite negative and influential when they lead away from learning goals and growth. Several of the students (Audrey, p. 11; Elizabeth, pp. 8-9; Frank, p. 14; John, p. 7; Yasmin, p. 31) expressed personal sensitivity to off-putting peer influences in their learning experiences. Frank, who has a relatively strong self-identity, in referring to a small group of influential but much less motivated peers, indicated that he was discouraged by “people that are annoying... That bug me too
much” (p.14). John (p. 7), who usually demonstrated minimal motivation, tended to gravitate towards peers with similar motivational levels. I have found that the dynamics of such relationships tend to reinforce these students’ negative identities and lethargy rather than more productive efforts.

With responsible support, the students may overcome these difficulties and move on to success (Norma, pp. 6, 8). The instructors, (Charlotte, p. 10; Margaret, p. 9; Norma p. 5; Scott, p. 7) all espoused the importance to the students of counselling as they work out the difficulties in the classroom and in the workplace. In demonstrating the importance of the supportive counselling provided by the program, Norma pointed out that when students “understand how they are undermining their own efforts and how they can avoid doing that, they usually will change” (p. 6).

The environment overall can either encourage or discourage the students, and both influences can be at work at the same time. Charlotte (p. 16) reminded us that there may be a “cold” learning environment that, in every sense, can discourage the students from participating and learning. The students want to feel accepted by both the instructors and the other students. Indeed, the whole complexity of the college initially can be very intimidating for these students, who generally process and learn about their new college environment in a prolonged manner. Everyone and everything, from the office staff to the formidable, immense physical layout of the buildings, can be a threatening environment until they become familiar, perhaps even embracing and accepting it as being safe. Scott said that “the size and complexity of the campus, I think, scares some of them off” (p. 10). He also said that for some there is “too much stimulation … and it is easy for them to get distracted and disorganized”
Students with Attention Deficit Disorder or those who are autistic often find it difficult to adjust to the stimulating and demanding environment of the program’s classroom and activities. If the student sees the environment as unfriendly, the student’s learning can be interfered with. Elizabeth described how her being “teased” (pp. 8-9) affected her feelings about school, and how her feelings changed and became more positive when that unfriendly environment changed. I have seen students reduce their verbal participation, decrease their work on assignments, and even be absent from class when they have had even minor disagreements with other students.

Many if not most of these students have a weak vision of their future. There are at least two major reasons for this. First, they have not had a great deal of success academically as compared to other “regular” students. And because success and future opportunities are often based on academic achievement, these students are well aware of their limitations in this area. A student who was not interviewed asked me during a casual conversational moment, “What am I going to do? What is going to become of me?” I believe it is questions like these that are harboured in many of these students’ hearts. Ian identified a second reason: that their vision will be influenced by their emotions and their functioning level. He said, “That is why it is difficult for some of them to have that sort of longer term articulated vision--this is what I am doing so that I can become or do X” (p. 7). This is demonstrated by the students, where I found the higher functioning students are often more likely to articulate goals for the future in a more detailed fashion than those who are lower functioning. However, there are also many high functioning students who see no
opportunities or hope for their future and those of lower functioning ability who do work towards an expressed goal.

**Interpretation Based on the Literature**

There are several themes within the literature reviewed that are consistent with the research findings in this study. The variety of disabilities that the students bring to the program was emphasized in the literature as the most frequent hindrance to high levels of motivation. Hughes (1995) pointed out that the “disability must be accommodated” (p. 4) before learning can take place. As well, Mpofu and Watson (1999, pp. 4-5) emphasized that because each student is unique, it was important to provide individualized adaptations to meet their separate needs. The instructors in this study pointed out that the students do not always disclose their disabilities; they may not know what some of them are, and they can go to great lengths to hide them, thus thwarting needed support. In some cases, the students are in complete denial that they even have certain disabilities. This is consistent with Mpofu and Watson, who indicated that adults with learning disabilities can have unrecognized strengths and weaknesses which leads these learning adults to various “compensatory strategies” (p. 2) but not to the needed accommodations.

Rogers and Thorpe (1981, p. 13) indicated that with motivational material and supportive staff that could tap into students’ emotional needs, it was possible to encourage internal motivation. In this study and from my experience, when disabilities that hinder learning are associated with emotional, psychological, or behavioural problems, identifying and confronting dysfunctional behaviours can lead to participatory and motivational success. However, when the disabilities are severe
and ingrained and the students are cognitively or emotionally limited, success is less certain. Taylor (2000) indicated that “affective learning” involves “emotions and feelings in meaning making” (p. 22). When there is an unwillingness or inability of the CVP students to respond to their feelings, this relationship of feelings is tied to their affective learning, and resulting reflection is hindered. This hindrance, as suggested by Taylor, strongly fits those students who fail to progress.

Discouragement is a major hindrance to learning and can come from a variety of sources. The literature suggested two major areas of discouragement, those of a personal nature (e.g., Babchuk & Courtney, 1995; Corley & Taymans, 2001; Mpofu & Watson, 1999; Taylor 2000) and those precipitated within the classroom (e.g., Babchuk & Courtney; Beder & Valentine, 1990; Howell, 2001; Hughes, 1995). Both of these areas are identified by Purkey and Novak (1996) in their book Inviting School Success. At the personal level, Babchuk and Courtney (p. 402) pointed out that where personal influence is lacking, those with the most learning needs tend not to participate. This has been my experience with several students such as Jeremy (lower functioning) and Marcus (high functioning), both of whom rejected any significant personal influence with instructors and counsellors and subsequently left the program. Charlotte (p. 11) and Margaret (p. 17) described motivational and participatory change in students when personal influence is accepted, usually through counselling and practical learning supports.

Mpofu and Watson (1999) pointed out that adults with learning disorders might have a variety of skills but may be apathetic in using them because of prior learning experiences. Margaret (p. 22) identified this sensitivity by pointing out that if the
students feel stupid, insecure, and hopeless, they cannot do the work. To varying degrees, the disabilities themselves generate a fear of failure and a resulting hindrance to participate (Margaret, p. 17). An aspect of this learning apathy is the syndrome of learned helplessness described by Charlotte (p. 15) and Alison (p. 15) and unfortunately sometimes reinforced by well-meaning parents and influential institutions, such as schools. I believe there is a relationship to what Brookfield (1990) calls the feeling of “impostership” and Corley and Taymans (2001) call the “impostor phenomenon” which can produce a fear of failure. Charlotte pointed to the “false image” (p. 14) the students may have of themselves, resulting in fear of making a mistake and missed learning opportunities. Audrey (p. 15) spoke of waiting for instructions rather than taking the initiative in learning situations. I have found that the CVP students’ disabilities and the self-image it gives them can cause the students to try to hide themselves and their work in the background, essentially faking their ability to do the work. To overcome this debilitating behaviour, Rogers and Thorpe (1981) suggest that if achievement is to be obtained, the student’s “self-concept must change” (p. 1).

Discouragement can also take place within the classroom setting. Some of the students expressed the need for more challenging work, but at other times the work was seen as too challenging or the student did not want too much of a challenge. These desires were sometimes compounded with an unrealistic belief in their own abilities or denial of their limitations (Gail, p. 29). Sometimes the students stated that they already knew most of the work that was being taught, but that was usually a reaction to their feelings of inadequacy and bravado towards other students in order to
avoid exposure of their limitations. For some students, it was the dislike of particular subjects (Elizabeth, p. 27) or a reaction to earlier negative experiences (Gail, p. 24) that brought on discouragement. To elicit classroom interest, Howell (2001, p. 2) argues for a learner centered approach and curriculum that will lead to student participation. Demetrion (2001) suggests using “what would be most effective” (pp. 93-94) to engage the student. Hughes (1995, p. 2), advocates avoiding discouraging teaching methods such as unnecessary jargon that can dampen interest, while Prentice (2001, p. 11) suggests topics that have interests and meanings that the students want to communicate. Although I agree with Howell that students want to know “how new knowledge relates to what they already know” (p. 3), I also believe they are sometimes prepared to learn about what they do not yet know but have a peaked interest in. Their innate curiosity and motivation can extend into the unknown, such as a new job or interest, even though they have little or no knowledge of its workings.

My interpretation of the data in this study suggests that the learning environment needs to feel warm in every sense (Charlotte, p. 16) as well as safe and embracing (Scott p. 10), or it will have a negative impact on student motivation. This is in agreement with Demetrion (2001), Howell (2001), Knowles (1984b), and Wlodkowski (1985), who all stress the importance of a safe, accepting classroom environment. Taylor (2000) stresses “positive teacher-student relationships” (p. 21) as being vital to acceptance, and Prentice (2001, p. 9) suggests that high faculty interest in the students is important.

In the study, peer influence from too many students in the classroom (Scott, p. 9) to negative attitudes (Margaret, p. 16) was identified as having an impact on
student motivation in the learning environment. Scott pointed out the presence of “group ethos” (p. 7) which could be positive or negative. Corley and Taymans (2001, p.153), Demetron (2001, p. 94), and Mposfu and Watson (1999, p. 14) all indicate the influence of “significant others” in relation to learning. Beder and Valentine (1990) found that the “urging of others” (p. 87) had a strong impact on younger adult learners. The findings in this study support these views.

**Research Question 4: What are the differences, if any, in the vocational students’ perception and motivational response to academic learning as distinguished from their response to their vocational learning and experiences?**

The data to answer research question number 4 were provided primarily by the students under Introduction: Background Section from question 1; from Learning questions 1, 2, 3, 7, and 8; from Placement questions 1, 2, 6, and 8; from Work Placement Class questions 1 and 5, and from the Learning in Academic Classes questions 3, 4, 6, and 7.

The data to answer research question number 4 from the instructors’ perspective were provided primarily by the instructors under Introduction: Background Section from questions 2, 4, 5, and 6; from the College Background Section from questions 6, 7, and 8; from Learning questions 1, 5, and 6; and from Placement/Job Coach questions 1 and 7.

**Major Themes That Emerged**

There are several differences as well as similarities in the vocational students’ perceptions and motivational response to academic learning as distinguished from their response to their vocational learning and experience.
All of the student interviewees expressed some interest in learning (Audrey p. 5; Elizabeth, p. 24; Frank p. 6; Isaac, p. 8; John, p. 5; Oscar, p. 7; William, p. 2; Yasmin, p. 11). In my experience in the program, very few students if any have shown no interest in learning. And in those who have presented this lack of interest, I believe it was because they saw no opportunities in the program that matched their interests, or worse, they had lost hope in their being able to learn anything meaningful in any instructional environment. Those who have lost all hope the most, are those who express the least amount of motivation. Novak (2002) in his insightful book Inviting Educational Leadership, suggests “constructing a shared hopeful vision” (p. 4), and “sustaining structures for imaginative acts of hope” (pp.120, 173) to encourage and provide hope in inviting schools. Novak, in referring to individual support, cites the work of Slade (2001), suggesting that what is required is the support of the “habits of hope--persistence, resourcefulness and courage” (p. 28). All the students who were interviewed (Audrey, p. 8; Elizabeth, p. 9; Frank, p. 10; Gail, p. 12; Isaac, p. 6; John, p. 11; Oscar, p. 11; William, p. 6; Yasmin, p. 11), were consistent in their assertion that learning meant “to know”, which would allow them “to do.” William’s attitude in this regard was reflected in his saying that learning meant to “gain some knowledge … so you know when somebody asks you what is happening, you can tell them” (p. 6). Likewise Oscar said, learning is “knowing fully what you are doing” (p. 11). However, Isaac expressed the learning difficulty with retention that these students struggle with when trying to learn new skills when he said learning means “having it in your mind, then you know you can remember it” (p. 6).
The students' interests and work outside of the college also reflect practicality and comfort in what they can do. Elizabeth (p. 3) has a part-time job at Blockbuster, and Gail (p. 3) baby-sits, both reflecting their long-term goals. What surprised me was that 2 of the students (Elizabeth, p. 3; Frank, p. 3) pursued music, and 2 (Gail, p. 3; Oscar, p. 5) were actively involved in sports and fitness, and they all demonstrated an enthusiasm and excitement about their futures. On the other hand, Audrey (p. 2) and Yasmin (p. 4), both of whom needed significant support in the workplace and in academics and who lean towards classroom work, expressed no outside interests and were less enthusiastic about leaving the program. This leads me to query if it is a lack of hope in outside-of-school success, indeed fear of failure, that is a motivating factor in seeking after more academic skills.

During the interviews, there was a difference in the emphasis on learning, with most of the students preferring job-related learning. Some of the students (Elizabeth, p. 7; Frank, p. 4; Gail, p. 22; Isaac, p. 5; John, p. 9; Oscar, p. 7; William, p. 5) showed a strong interest in learning in the workplace or learning that would directly enhance their success in the work environment. Frank hoped that the work experience would "give me a little bit [of] an edge ... in what I hopefully plan to do" (p. 4). William also expressed the importance of learning on the job by saying, "It helps you so that when you look for a real job ... you know what to do" (p. 5). Others (Audrey, pp. 5, 26; Yasmin, p. 5) indicated more of a bent towards academic and classroom learning, but this did not preclude their interest in learning in the workplace. Audrey stated that she wants "to learn more stuff" (p. 5). She said "I like school," and the academic classes allowed her to "find more friends ... and learn to be smarter" (p. 26). But
even Audrey said she would “like to find a job I really, really like, and keep it” (p. 26). Yasmin expressed a preference for in-class learning in saying, “I wanted to have an education ... I wanted to continue my studies” (p. 5). I have seen Yasmin several times since the interview and her graduation, and she hopes to be engaged in part-time studies to improve her academic skills, especially her skills in English. Likewise, Elizabeth successfully pursues upgrading at the College in order to attain her dream of working in a library. All of the students (Audrey, 26; Elizabeth, p. 31; Frank, p. 9; Gail, p. 30; Isaac, p. 20; John, p. 5; Oscar, p. 26; William, p. 18; Yasmin, p. 36) expressed an interest in succeeding in the workplace and eventually obtaining a job. For some (Audrey, p. 17; Frank, p. 22; Gail, p. 8; John, p. 22) their self-image was enhanced when related to their success and participation in particular vocations. Having successful work experiences gave them a feeling of usefulness, worth, and acceptance in the broader sense. Both Frank (p. 22) and Gail (p. 8) beamed when they talked of their respective interests and successes in computers and child care respectively.

Sometimes the students’ attitude can drift negatively into one of coasting, both with their work in school and/or in their work placements. Both Scott (p. 6) and Charlotte (p. 7) identified this as a motivational concern. Frank had a tendency to put in minimal effort in his work in the classroom but worked like a Trojan in his placements. In referring to his lack of classroom work, Frank said that “I have to be more committed than I am sometimes. The times when it is not too helpful” (p. 13). However, when it came to his successful work placement, Frank showed a great deal of commitment, indicating “I would rather...keep working and not take any breaks”
Isaac (pp. 25, 28) demonstrated a coasting attitude in both the classroom and in his work placements, which was quite prevalent in my teaching experience with him. In referring to the classroom, he said that he does his work "slowly" (p. 25) and his efforts are "to get the marks basically" (p. 28). Gail, who was extremely motivated in her placement while working with children, her primary interest, had a tendency to react stubbornly and put a minimal effort into classroom work or situations in which she was not interested. When she felt forced to sit in a certain location in the classroom, she exhibited a defiant attitude by saying, "I don't care" (p. 24) and "It doesn't matter to me" (p. 25). The students (Audrey, p. 9; Frank, p. 17; Oscar, p. 20; William, p. 8; Yasmin, pp. 5, 27) all indicated they wanted to be successful in their endeavours. The corollary is that because they have more experience receiving instructions than giving them, their (Frank, p. 16; Gail, p. 28; John, p. 17; Oscar, p. 18; William, p. 10; Yasmin, p. 17) general attitude is such that they will do what they are told. But that doesn't necessarily mean they are happy about it, and these circumstances may determine their overall attitude and success. William, in expressing resistance to some mundane jobs, declared, "I will do it, cause its better than doing nothing. ... I will help them do it" (p. 10).

There was a tendency for the students to want jobs that they saw as worthwhile. Some of the students (Elizabeth, p. 21; Gail, pp. 8, 23; Oscar, pp. 15, 19) (who from my experience speak for many of the students) indicated that this can be achieved through paid work. Doing work that earns them money not only rewards them for work done, but also enhances their self-esteem and reinforces their self-worth and ability to contribute and participate productively in the world around them. This
means much to them, and they see it as a right of passage and independence. It has a greater worth to them than success in the classroom. I have seen an extra twinkle in their eyes when they have achieved that goal. Gail spoke enthusiastically of her daycare job: “I get paid” (p. 8) and “It’s where I get paid” (p. 23). And Oscar said in anticipation, “I think it will be absolutely fantastic. ... I am going to get employed for real employed-for-pay work” (p. 15). However, Yasmin also indicated that for some students rewards for achievement can also be important in the classroom. In seeing other students obtain achievement awards, Yasmin said, “I hope to get the ... award in the future” (p. 36). Gail expressed her joy and enthusiasm through her smiling facial expression and excited tone of voice when she told me how proud she was of the favourable letter of recommendation she received from her workplace. She saw the letter as evidence of her performance in the workplace being “very, very successful” (p. 18).

To my surprise, many of the students (Frank, p. 24; Gail, p. 30; Oscar, p. 26; William, p. 3; Yasmin, p. 36) expressed an interest in continuing their education after completing the program, reflecting their desire for continued learning. Although I believe much of the motivation stems from their wanting greater skills to compete in the workplace, I also believe many still have the innate curiosity to learn for the sake of learning. The students reinforced my perception that many of them do have an interest in learning academic subjects. Both from my experience in the classroom and in the interviews, the students expressed an interest in learning English (Frank, p. 6; John, p. 5; William, p. 2), Geography and History (Elizabeth, p. 23; Gail, p. 12; Isaac, pp. 3, 21), Computers (Frank, p. 5), Family Studies (Oscar, p. 3), Mathematics
What did surprise me was that even those students who were less motivated, like John (p. 5), expressed an enthusiastic interest in learning. All of the students stated that they wanted to learn. What may interfere with this enthusiasm is their belief that they cannot learn much of their desired subject matter because of their past learning failures and the difficulty and time it takes them to learn. In my conversations with some students, they expressed that they have not always had the opportunity to learn subjects in their areas of interest. As they become more mature and become more involved in the world around them, their new experiences cultivate those and other interests, and they tend to express those learning desires in the classroom and ask for opportunities to meet them.

There is a difference between the perception of success in the academic classroom and that in the workplace. As indicated by my interpretations of the data related to research question 1, the students see overall success as finishing the program. But in between, some of the students (Frank, p. 9; Gail, p. 20; William p. 5) who tend to be more occupationally oriented place more importance on workplace success than on academic success. The academics are seen as a means to an end. Charlotte stated that work is the “carrot” (p. 7) for some students that keeps them in the program. That certainly has been my experience as well. On the other hand, those students (Audrey, p. 14; Yasmin, p. 27) who strive for academic achievement may want success in the workplace as well, but may be more familiar with and feel more confident and safer in the academic setting.

There was a third group, such as John (pp. 17, 25), that presents a coasting attitude, who I feel have lost hope in themselves and their capabilities at most levels,
which is reflected in poor motivation in both environments. These are the difficult students to reach, who need support and enough time and experience, perhaps positive critical incidents, in building a realistic hope in their own capabilities.

There is also a fourth group that is not represented in this sample but who tend to drop out of the program, usually at an early stage. These students tend to be young and are usually right out of high school. They are generally more self-aware and mature, may be relatively more cognitively capable than other students in the program, but usually have significant learning disabilities. They drop out of the program for several reasons, but it is usually related to their being embarrassed about being in the CVP and see it as being different from the regular stream in the College. They feel different, and they often feel that they are or want to be more capable, and hope that they could be more suitably placed in a regular program. Some of these students have enrolled in other college programs, usually college upgrading, or General Arts and Sciences if they can qualify, but reports indicate they almost inevitably fail. Most drop out of the college afterwards, too embarrassed, or not motivated enough to take advantage of the CVP learning opportunities. Although Demetrion (2001) found that students respond to new challenges, in this group, embarrassment and fear of failure override that incentive to participate. Any disabilities with this group tend not to be visible, and you will often find these students initially mixing with students in other programs. I have also found they tend to be distracted by outside interests and friends and may have or are looking for part-time or full-time employment.
Interpretation Based on the Literature

The students in this study indicated several reasons why they want to participate in the two aspects of the program, the academic and vocational. They ranged from strengthening old and gaining new academic skills in order to reinforce and strengthen their self-image, closer to that of their perception of normalcy and academic competency. From the occupational point of reference, they also wanted to strengthen their vocational skills and experience in order to feel and be more competent and have the opportunity to demonstrate that competence by obtaining paid employment. The intensity and variations of these goals reflect the definition of motivation as declared by Beder and Valentine (1990) as “the basic reasons, which lead learners to participate” (p. 79).

The students articulated that they wanted to learn practical skills that would enhance their employability, which is indicative of what Beder and Valentine (1990) identify as “instrumental gain,” but they also indicated a desire for self-improvement, signifying the presence of the reflective process pointed out by Knowles (1984b) and Demetrion (2001). For some, the aspiration to learn is more prevalent and active than in others, but all the students indicated some desire for further learning. These diverse interests suggest a need to evaluate Prentice’s (2001) view that the integration of work and academic instruction should emphasize how the work is taught rather than what is taught. Although how work is taught is important, the students in this study indicated that what is taught is also very important to them, and they desired an opportunity to have an “authenticity of voice” as expressed by Demetrion (2001) and involvement in a self-determining process as expressed by Corley and Taymans.
(2001). When skills are obtained and personal involvement and experience of the student increase, the motivation for “launching” towards restructuring and even greater independence, as expressed by Beder and Valentine, also increases.

The students reflected an enhanced self-image as they built up successive achievements in the classroom, and especially when their work placements were successful. This is very consistent with Rogers and Thorpe (1981), who indicated that when motivation increases, so does self-esteem. This also reflects their view when citing Mazzarella (1979) that “if students are to achieve, they must first see themselves as achievers” (p. 1).

Although all of the students expressed that they wanted to achieve, if there was a motivational deficiency, usually exhibited as a coasting attitude, its impact would show up first and more emphatically in the classroom. There are those like Frank, who exhibited a coasting attitude initially in the classroom but became highly motivated in the workplace. This successful outcome is also consistent with Hughes’ (1995) view that setting higher goals can provide an incentive towards “personal growth” and “the feeling of being competitive” (p. 1). This increased vocational motivation was then moderately transferred to later classroom activities, even though he strongly preferred the work world. Others, like John, showed sporadic motivation with a coasting attitude in both the classroom and workplace. This is also consistent with Corley and Taymans (2001), who found that adults who had coped with learning and persistent academic difficulties were strongly affected in their educational program performance. The sensitivity to growth subtleties of the students through their learning experience that is needed, as described by Demetrion (2001), is
indispensable to meeting the needs (especially emotional) of those less motivated and those in the program most capable but most likely to terminate participation.

The students themselves stressed that rewards are highly motivating factors for motivation and participation. In the classroom, marks and feedback and sometimes the concept of winning small competitions in which the students could adequately compete provided incentives for participation. Corley and Taymans (2001) are in accord and advise that “feedback” in the areas of student needs can lead to increased motivation. In the workplace, the same timely feedback is needed, but the students also expressed that finishing the program and gaining the reward of pay-for-work was a long-term motivator and incentive to participate.

All of the students expressed some interest in learning (exhibiting a level of internal motivation and emotional involvement) both in the classroom and in the workplace, and there was an interest to continue learning activities after graduation. This is in agreement with Knowles (1984b), who describes self-directing students as “ready to learn” (p. 11). This awareness and interest in continuing their learning on an ongoing basis, as well as varied subject interests ranging from practical skills to scholarly subjects that bring greater clarity of the world to them, is also strongly consistent with Howell’s belief (2001) that adults “take their education seriously” (p. 2). I would add that learning for the CVP students also includes a desire for self-actualization, beyond practical skills, that will give them a greater understanding of the whole, a hope for their future, and the ability and opportunity to be a productive contributor to their community.
Summary

In this chapter, I have presented the various dimensions of motivation as perceived by the participants in this study: a small sample of students enrolled in the CVP and a few of their instructors, in order to answer the four main research questions. The major themes that emerged from the content analysis of the transcribed interviews were: student interests, student support, student acceptance as adults, relationships, success, learning environment, learning hindrances, student attitude, maturation, learning, self-image, emotion, and motivation as factors that affected student motivation.

In Chapter Five I present the conclusions and implications for practice, further research, and for theory development.
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

In Chapter Four I presented the findings of this study which explored the perceptions of a small purposive sample of students ($n = 9$) and some of their instructors ($n = 6$) in a College Vocational Program (CVP) located at one campus of a large College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT$_a$) in urban southern Ontario regarding factors that enhance or diminish student motivation to persist in college studies. The research questions that were addressed were:

1. How do college vocational students view and define success, both in the program and in the community?
2. What factors encourage the motivation of CVP students to participate in learning activities?
3. What factors discourage the motivation of CVP student's to participate in learning activities?
4. What are the differences, if any, in the vocational students perceptions and motivational responses to academic learning as distinguished from their response to their vocational learning and experiences?

There are several conclusions that have come out of the study on the motivation of the College Vocational Program students.

Conclusions and Implications for Professional Practice

In answer to **research question 1**, being successful in the program was an important factor expressed by both the students and instructors. However, each group sees success in the program in a slightly different way. The students see success as being able to meet the requirements for passing and successfully completing the
program. As an adjunct, they want to attain appropriate skills and behaviours that will allow them to finish the program but also to obtain and retain paid employment. This is an expression of the primary meaning of motivation as to why they have chosen to participate, as pointed out by Beder and Valentine (1990) and Schenstead (1997).

The instructors also want the students to complete the program, but they put a stronger stress on the importance of the students obtaining new skills that include increased behavioural, vocational, and academic competency. This effective approach, the building of competency as expressed by Prentice (2001), Beder and Valentine (1990), Demetrion (2001), was expected by both teachers and students.

The effective expectations of increased competency in basic skills tend to morph from what Beder and Valentine (1990) describe as “what I hope to do” to become more of “what I hope to be.” This process is overtly unexpressed, but is a hoped for and understood by the instructors and many of the students. Cranton (1992) and Taylor (2000) state that motivational reactions can be situational, with “critical incidents” from a positive reaction being transformative, or from a negative reaction, reinforcing dependent tendencies. There are two broad reactions by the students to this process.

In the first, this process starts when many of the students present and practice a dependent expectation, as expressed by Knowles (1984b). The student with this “dependent personality” expects the instructors and learning environment to provide appropriate teaching materials and lessons to be learned, and they in turn would produce an outcome to please the instructor or supervisor, with quality being of less
importance than the outcome itself. When the rewards, such as acceptable grading or desired emotional response such as praise as an outcome for their efforts, is less than expected, those students with a deeper dependency and inflexibility may react with a debilitating response to further efforts. This dependency is also expressed by some students when they view the working world as hostile and perceive failure in that environment; they express their reluctance to leave school while expressing a desire for more education.

The second general reaction presented by the CVP students was a more transmissive one, moving from effective pedagogical expectations towards a more affective response in their learning. They proved willing and flexible enough to adjust to changing learning and life situations, exhibiting a more mature outlook, not locked into but growing out of their dependence on the learning environment. This is consistent with Cranton (1992), who suggests that there are several possible learning paths for a transformative learner. These paths can include the learning of new academic skills or the acquisition new vocational ones, but as Rogers and Thorpe (1981) emphasize, it is the necessity if a positive change in the students' self-concept for success is to be achieved. The CVP students' learning responses are consistent with Demetrion's (2001) observation that as a students skills increase, their self-confidence will also increase. Their responses are also aligned with Hughes' (1995) observation that the students gain "a feeling of being competitive" (p. 1) when they are successful in learning new skills.

The pedagogical expectations that initially attract the students' attention, but rely on external motivation, pose a serious impediment to meaningful and sustained
learning for the more dependent learner. Indirectly, all the students, and explicitly all the instructors, expressed that an affective learning environment should encourage maturity and internal motivation. To support this, learning experiences that the students can relate to, including some of their interests that take into consideration their voice, should be encouraged. This expresses the need for the students to have an “authenticity of voice” as proposed by Demetrion (2001) and involvement in a self-determining process, as identified by Corley and Taymans (2001). This approach also requires the expectation of successful achievement of prescribed learning outcomes that will encourage these students to continue their efforts on a sustaining basis. Change for these students comes slowly, and resistance can be substantial to accepting their innate ability to tap their own internal motivation and embrace success rather than the easier and more familiar road of failure.

All of the students in this study exhibited to varying degrees an innate manifestation of energy that was directed towards learning, consistent with the observations of Schenstead (1997). However, not all of their interests were the same, nor did they all express the same level of intensity. They also presented sensitive, fluctuating self-images that are maturing at a later and slower rate and with fewer and less realistic life experiences than many of their contemporary peers in the college environment. This sometimes poses unrealistic expectations, both occupationally and academically, and a false self-esteem that needs to be tempered through realistic criticism and supportive counselling. A caveat to that, however, is that sometimes these students have more potential than instructors and counsellors recognize, as Gardner’s work on Multiple Intelligences points out (1983).
Two themes emerged to answer research question 2 regarding factors that encourage the students to participate. The first theme is that of supportive relationships, and the second was the need for varied and encompassing structural support.

As identified by Corley and Taymans (2001), Demetrion (2001), and Mpofu and Watson (1999), significant others play an important part in motivating individual learners. Family members (usually parents) had the most influential voice, followed closely by instructors and counsellors. There was also an indication of the extensive support of siblings (usually sisters), and a lesser mention of fathers and male siblings, with the familial male influence seemingly less than that of the females. The reason may be that familial responsibility may fall more to the more nurturing and protective role of women.

Taylor (2000) and Prentice (2001) state that classroom relationships can be quite significant, and my interpretations of the findings in this study support this. There were long-standing interpersonal ties between some of the students with peers from previous school experiences, and that continued to provide participatory support. Support from peers was very important, especially at the emotional level, which provided the basis for more practical help in their work tasks and learning.

I found that both previous and present instructors and counsellors provided considerable influence on initial and subsequent participation and retention. Counselling proved to be crucial for some students, with the job coach, work supervisors, and instructors all contributing support and direction. This is consistent with Taylor (2000), who emphasizes the importance of positive teacher-student
relationships. In this study, those who had poor supervisory and often superficial relationships struggled in their placements. This is consistent with Babchuk and Courtney (1995), who correctly identified that where personal influence is lacking, those in most need tend to refrain from participating. Some students did not come into the program highly motivated but participated when interest was shown in them and with the support and encouragement of the instructors, which is consistent with the impact of an “invitational approach” as advocated by Purkey and Novak (1996). This approach invites the student to participate in their own learning while attempting to provide an environment that enables and encourages the learners to be successful. They define “invitational education” as “a perceptually anchored, self-concept approach to the educative process” (p. 3). The authors present evidence “that individuals respond best when they share the company of educators who believe them to be able, valuable, and responsible and who intentionally summon them to share in these beliefs” (p. 17). Novak (2002) describes invitational education as a “system of assumptions, concepts and strategies for developing and sustaining imaginative acts of hope in schools and beyond” (pp. 19-20). He adds that “it is a communicative theory of ethical practice that aims to create educational contexts in which people want to be and learn” (p. 20). For the CVP student (and all other learners), I have found in my experience that when aspects of such an approach are used, it provides a safe foundation and catalyst for the hope they often lack and an opportunity towards “what I hope to be” as apposed to “what I hope to do,” as indicated by Beder and Valentine (1990). It provides an opportunity for validity, worth, and pride in their efforts and work, because of their own initiation and invitational input. Beder and
Valentine (1990) stated that using the learning environment as a “diversion” when supported by others can be a motivating force. Overall, there was high faculty interest and participation in the welfare of the students, and that unity led to greater student motivation, which is consistent with the findings of Prentice (2001).

The second need to encourage the students’ motivation towards participation was the varied and complex requirement of adequate structural support. Structural support includes environmental conditions such as the physical and learning structure as well as the personal interactions that take place within that structure.

My interpretations of the data in this study suggest that it is important to be flexible with the students and their learning needs while providing an array of learning experiences and materials. Purkey and Novak (1996) provide comprehensive lists of “practical suggestions for the whole school” that will invite school success (pp. 153-191). While their focus appears to be on elementary and secondary school learners, many of the suggestions are very appropriate to the teaching and learning environment for students with learning disabilities.

These findings are also consistent with Demetrion (2001), who suggests that a “variety of approaches” are necessary. Corley and Taymans (2001) note that many students have a legacy of a less than supportive pedagogical approach, and the CVP students seem especially dependent in this area. Thus a transmissive, effective teaching strategy can be effective, especially when the CVP students tended towards wanting to be “recipients of knowledge” as expressed by Howell (2001) and show “authority dependence” pointed out by Brookfield (1990).
There should be a strong learner-centered environment, such as expressed by Knowles (1984a). Because the CVP students do not generally have a largeress of their own experience that other adult students do and are usually inadequately prepared for college life, as is expressed by Howell (2001), and when combined with dependency and cognitive disabilities, this limits the transformative experience.

Several instructors expressed the need for adequate tools and materials, including available assistive technology, necessary for the students to learn. This is in agreement with Barr and Tagg (1995), Howell (2001), and Prentice (2001), who advocate for a relevant curriculum. The students expressed a need for adequate time to digest and complete their work, and this is strongly consistent with Taylor (2000), who indicates that the transformative learning process requires adequate time for the students to process the relevant learning material.

A very important aspect of motivation was the need for timely and effective feedback that includes their work and behaviour in the classroom. This is expressed strongly by the instructors and students, as well as Corley and Taymans (2001). Reflective practices are encouraged that involve change at an emotional level in order for meaningful learning to take place, such as that expressed by Taylor (2000). Going a step further, feedback can be seen to be a crucial motivator for both the student and instructor in an affective reciprocal learning environment.

Overall, the students expressed a preference for the vocational program environment with the integration of academic and vocational instruction when combined with the learners' interests. This is in agreement with Prentice (2001), who states such integration would strengthen motivation. The learning environment was
emphasized by the students and instructors as being very important. It was expressed that the main aspects of the learning environment should be welcoming and accepting, with the expectation that the students can be successful. This expectation of success is strongly supported by Purkey and Novak (1996), Corley and Taymans (2001), Demetrion (2001), Rogers and Thorpe (1981), and Hughes (1995). Hughes also emphasizes the importance of higher vocational objectives for the encouragement of motivation, and such a desire for challenging work was strongly indicated by both instructors and students who participated in this study.

The students also expressed a desire for a comfortable and safe environment. In doing so, they preferred an environment that is known, calm, and quiet, that they see as friendly and fun, providing help and support, while including any needed counselling. For the instructors, the environmental wish list would include security, appropriate “light and space,” a conducive learning environment with small class sizes, accommodation for special needs, and the freedom for students to make mistakes. This concurs with Demetrion (2001), Howell (2001), Knowles (1984b), and Wlodkowski (1985), who all gave emphasis to a safe, accepting learning environment.

With respect to research question 3, the instructors and students suggested many factors that could discourage the CVP students from participating in learning activities. The most emphasized hindrance was the variety of disabilities presented by the students. Hughes (1995) and Mpofu and Watson (1999) emphasize that individualized adaptations need to be put in place to accommodate any disabilities before optimal learning can take place. The instructors pointed out that the students
do not always disclose their disabilities and may be in denial of them. Mpofu and Watson also indicate that adults with learning disabilities can have strengths and weakness unrecognized, which can lead to various “compensatory strategies” (p. 2), but not the needed accommodations. Capitalizing on positively strengthened instructor-student relationships, dedicated observation can help identify unclear or denied disabilities and behaviours that can affect motivation and retention.

When the students’ disabilities hindering learning were explored in relation to the students’ emotional needs as suggested by Rogers and Thorpe (1981), there was participatory and motivational success through identifying and confronting the dysfunctional behaviours. However, when the disabilities were severe and ingrained and the students cognitively or emotionally limited, success was less certain. Feelings tied to reflective learning and an unwillingness to respond to those feelings, as suggested by Taylor (2000), strongly reflected the experiences of students who failed to progress. It was determined that efforts towards improving the emotional, behavioural, and learning needs of the students had favourable results. These successful efforts mentioned by students and instructors included the use of counselling, technology, and additional instructional support, and indicated an increase in the motivation of the student and helped alleviate barriers and fear in the learning process.

Discouragement is a major hindrance to learning. The literature suggested two major areas of discouragement: those of a personal nature (e.g., Babchuk & Courtney, 1995; Corley & Taymans, 2001; Mpofu & Watson, 1999; Taylor 2000) and those
precipitating within the classroom (e.g., Babchuk & Courtney, 1995; Beder & Valentine, 1990; Howell, 2001; Hughes, 1995).

Personal influence played a strong role in the participation of students in this study, and where it was found lacking, those with the most learning needs tended not to participate, which is consistent with the findings of Babchuk and Courtney (1995). I also found that when personal influence was accepted, positive motivational and participatory change took place.

I found that prior learning experiences can be a hindrance to learning, which is in agreement with the views of Mpofu and Watson (1999). An aspect of this learning difficulty identified by several instructors is the syndrome of learned helplessness that can generate the fear of failure. There is also a relationship to what Brookfield (1990) calls the feeling of “impostership” and Corley and Taymans (2001) call the “impostor phenomenon,” which can produce a fear of failure. Students whose self-esteem and self-image are very low require the support and encouragement of significant others before they will begin to feel it is worthwhile to invest strongly in their own learning. For meaningful change and growth to take place, it is imperative that their self-image improve. Some of the students seem to have their behaviours frozen in time, perhaps reflecting past critical incidents, and it will take a great deal of effort and perhaps new “critical incidents” to encourage behaviour change.

Discouragement can also take place within the classroom. Some students expressed the need for more challenging work but then seemingly contradicted themselves by also complaining that the work was at times too challenging. These competing desires were sometimes compounded with an unrealistic belief in their
own abilities or denial of their limitations. For some students, discouragement came as the result of dislike for particular subjects, which sometimes were the result of prior negative experiences. To elicit classroom interest, Demetrion (2001), Howell (2001), Hughes (1995), and Prentice (2001) all argue for a learner-centered approach and curriculum, while Hughes (1995) also advocates avoiding discouraging teaching methods that can dampen interest. Although I agree with Howell that students want to know the relationship of new knowledge to what they already know, I also see that students are sometimes prepared to learn about what they do not yet know, because of their innate curiosity.

The CVP students are still maturing emotionally, and they are cognitively less mature, with less broad worldly experience than that of their peers of the same age. Discouragement comes easily, and learning takes these students additional time. The work itself should emphasize concrete and real-world examples, making it more likely that the students can grasp the new concepts and skills. Wherever possible, hands-on materials that can be manipulated for demonstration purposes should be used. I have found theory is hard for these students to grasp, and impossible for some. Discouraging teaching methods, such as long lectures that cause the students to lose concentration, should be avoided. It is important to provide a range of learning materials, exercises, and evaluation that are challenging but will meet their differing abilities and interests. Work should be broken up into learnable segments, with enough time and practice for completion, with recognition for student progress as much as possible. Homework, likewise, should be kept to achievable and nominal amounts, realizing outside support may be minimal. Because of short-term and long-
term memory limitations, new work that reviews previous learning can act to reinforce those recently learned skills while supplying areas of success. Feedback during and after learning experiences should be realistic and frequent. Slow learning and initial failure of some tasks can be presented positively as part of the learning process, not as an end product. Having classes with smaller groups, or separate classes according to abilities when the range of diverse learning abilities is too wide, will lessen discouragement. Another possibility is separation according to maturity and interest in work as opposed to those less mature and not ready for the work environment.

The learning environment needs to feel warm, safe, and embracing in every sense, with high faculty interest, or it will have a negative impact on motivation. This is in full agreement with Demetrion (2001), Howell (2001), Knowles (1984b), Purkey and Novak (1996), and Wlodkowski (1985). Taylor (2000) and Prentice (2001) address the need for strong faculty interest. The work-based program met the approval and needs of most of the students, especially of those who were more emotionally mature. Giving all the students opportunity to express their “voice” and “desires” will strengthen their interests and help them to buy into the learning process, making it meaningful to them. For those whose self-esteem is low, having their voice and interests accepted will help support their feelings of “authenticity” within the college, providing an alternative to feelings of “impostership.”

Peer influence was indicated as potentially having a negative impact on student motivation. Issues included too many students in the classroom, negative attitudes, and the effect of “group ethos” (Scott, p. 7), which could be positive or negative.
Corley and Taymans (2001), Demetrion (2001), and Mpofu and Watson (1999, p. 14), all identified the influence of peers in relation to learning, with Beder and Valentine (1990) pointing out the strong influence on young adult learners. I strongly agree with this observation from my own experience. Positive, supportive learning relationships in and out of the classroom should be encouraged, and negative ones should be discouraged.

Familial ties (including siblings) can also have strong positive or negative influences on the student. Where possible, a strong line of communication between those individuals and the program in support of the student learning can be beneficial. However, it is imperative that this relationship foster self-sufficiency and independence within the academic and vocational learning process. When this does not occur, maturation can be stifled and undermine program and student goals.

With respect to research question 4, the students indicated several reasons why they want to participate in the two aspects of the program, the academic and vocational. They want to strengthen old and gain new academic skills in order to reinforce and strengthen their self-image and come closer to their perception of normalcy and academic competency. From the occupational perspective, they want to strengthen their vocational skills and experience in order to be more competent and to be able to demonstrate that competency in obtaining paid employment. Both of these reasons are strong motivators. As these students do not see themselves as normal (through their disabilities and labelling as having exceptionalities—they have been told they are not normal) they see learning both vocational and academic skills as concrete efforts at increasing their self-esteem and abilities towards normalcy.
This meets the definition of motivation expressed by Beder and Valentine (1990), suggesting there are “basic reasons, which lead learners to participate” (p. 79).

The aspiration to learn was more prevalent and active in some than in other participants in this study, but all the students indicated some desire for further learning. This expression can be found in the classroom and workplace, and there was an interest to continue learning after graduation. This is in agreement with Knowles (1984b), who describes self-directing students as “ready to learn.” Although Prentice’s (2001) view is that instruction should emphasize how the work is taught rather than what is taught, the students indicated that what was taught is also very important to them, and they wanted an “authenticity of voice” as expressed by Demetrion (2001) and involvement in a self-determining process as expressed by Corley and Taymans (2001).

The students wanted to learn practical skills, which is indicative of what Beder and Valentine (1990) express as “instrumental gain,” but they also indicated a desire for self-improvement, signifying the reflective process as pointed out by Knowles (1984b) and Demetrion (2001).

When skills, involvement, and experience were increased, resulting in successive achievements, the students reflected an enhanced self-image, which concurs strongly with Rogers and Thorpe (1981), who indicated that when motivation increases, self-esteem will as well. As well, the motivation for “launching” towards restructuring and independence, as expressed by Beder and Valentine (1990), also increased.
If there was a motivational deficiency, its impact showed up first and most clearly in the classroom. There were some students who exhibited a coasting attitude in the classroom but became highly motivated in the workplace. This outcome is consistent with Hughes's (1995) finding that setting higher goals can provide an incentive towards "personal growth" and "the feeling of being competitive." Other students showed sporadic motivation in the classroom and workplace. This supports the view of Corley and Taymans (2001) that adults who had coped with persistent learning difficulties were strongly affected and could be hindered in their educational program performance.

My interpretations of the data of this study suggest several implications for professional practice. The students strongly indicated that success for them was being able to complete the program. To help the students realize success, encouragement and support through the use of activities that build success and supportive counselling, when necessary, by the program instructors and counsellors to help the students believe that they can achieve needs to be an integral and present part of the learning environment (Purkey & Novak, 1996). The students who participated in this study also felt that part of success is learning meaningful skills that can help them obtain and retain employment. Curriculum should reflect the skills, especially the practical ones, and foster behaviours that they will likely need for employment and independent living.

The students indicated that they preferred different approaches in teaching styles. Taking student needs into consideration, a proper balance between providing both effective and affective teaching approaches will help tap into students' interests
and encourage increased interest, motivation, and participation. For those students most cognitively challenged, a transmissive approach seems optimal, but not exclusively, while those more cognitively capable are able to take fuller advantage of an affective approach. Both groups will benefit from hands-on materials and instruction.

Most of the students expressed and showed varied interests in the world and its processes around them, in the interviews and in the classroom, beyond their immediate tasks and learning requirements. For many of the students this curiosity is expressed through simple questions such as, “Where do hurricanes come from?” and they expect a transmissive pedagogical answer, either verbally or graphically. When possible, exploring these questions should be integrated into class discussions to “give voice” to the students’ innate curiosity and support continued motivation and participation. With encouragement and supportive exploratory assignments, some of the students can progress towards growth-oriented affective learning.

Based on my interpretations of the data in this study and my own observations, it is clear that the goals of the students and faculty are essentially the same. Both want the students to succeed in their academic and work placements. The students’ ultimate goal is to be successful enough to obtain and retain paid employment. Even those students who are still looking at further academic education express that they ultimately see success as obtaining paid employment. Any learning situation in between is seen as a means to that end, and the more the students see the learning activities linked to their final employment goal, the more likely they are to participate.
All of the students interviewed demonstrated an innate energy force that could be directed towards learning, but not all of their interests were the same or of the same intensity. As well, there are emotional and cognitive differences that will influence any learning situation. Timely and sensitive allowances and tolerances, while providing differential academic and emotional supports, may be necessary to meet the unique requirements of these differences. Attempts to tap into the interests of the students at both an academic and social level and to link these with effective learning tasks could help engender involvement in their individual learning and perhaps lead to affective learning maturity.

The pedagogical expectations that initially get the students’ attention but rely on external motivation can, over a prolonged period, pose a marked impediment to meaningful and sustained learning. A maturing towards an internal and affective response by the students requires meaningful learning situations that the students can relate to. It also requires diligence in the learning environment to support and expect successful learning outcomes that will encourage these students to further endeavours on a sustained basis. Change for these students can come slowly, and resistance to accepting their innate ability to tap into their own internal motivation and embrace success rather than the easier and more familiar road of failure can be substantial.

Once these students have tasted success and are motivated, they still present sensitive, fluctuating self-images that are maturing at a later and slower rate, with fewer realistic life experiences than many of their contemporary peers in the college environment. This sometimes poses unrealistic expectations by the students, both occupationally and academically, and a false self-esteem that needs to be tempered
through realistic criticism and supportive counselling, both in the classroom and in the workplace. False expectations and impossible endeavours can lead to failure and reinforcement of a negative self-image. A caveat to that, however, is that sometimes these students have more potential than we as instructors and counsellors recognize. Elizabeth is now successfully progressing in the Office Administration program at the College. Other students in the past have also successfully progressed in their academic endeavours. How far they can progress and prosper within available opportunities is unknown.

The themes that emerged with respect to variables that support motivation suggest several implications for those working with and especially those instructing CVP students. Relationships are very important and influential with respect to the students’ participation and retention in the program. Parents, especially mothers, exert a strong influence in externally encouraging participation, and other members of the family, including siblings, provide support towards retention. For the instructor and counsellor, this means that although not all parents are or can be involved with the CVP student, all members of the family can be potential remedial and emotional mentors for the student.

Peer relationships can play an important role in the students’ retention and motivation, especially those that have evolved over extended periods of time. These students have substantial dependency needs and typically mature at a slower rate than the general population, and that reality needs to be recognized when considering comfort and safety. Using these established peer relationships in meaningful activities, especially early in the program, could help provide an atmosphere of
familiarity and safety while motivating and encouraging the students towards constructive participation.

The instructors, job coach, and counsellors can also have a strong influence, and this can be utilized to assist the students towards greater maturity, personal responsibility, and independence.

Adequate structural support is crucial for encouraging and maintaining the reciprocal motivation of both the instructors and especially the students. For the students, it is important from the first day that the learning environment present itself as welcoming of each student, and that each be seen and treated as an individual who is accepted (Purkey & Novak, 1996). It is important in this context that the instructors, job coach, and counsellors present a program in which the student can achieve success. This can be achieved through a learning environment that is seen by the students as comfortable and safe (Purkey & Novak). In general, the preference expressed in this study was that a learning environment be “calm and quiet,” with adequate “light and space” and with not overly large working groups. An enthusiastic accommodation for special physical and learning needs is an important and necessary component for the avoidance of frustration and despair and continued motivation of those who need such supports. Accommodations can range from rearranging the furniture or placement of the students to providing alternative functional materials such as enlarged text, and technological accommodations such as laptops with assistive software. A variety of teaching techniques using auditory and visual aids, as well as abundant opportunity for student input, can enhance motivation.
The use of hands-on challenging learning materials and progressive exercises that the students can work with at their own pace encourages the students to take ownership and control of their learning. These students generally learn more from practical materials they can physically manipulate or see than from ideas and concepts that are theoretical and unseen.

Learning materials and exercises that will be of most relevance and enhance the students’ vocational experience should be strongly emphasized. However, the students in the interviews (and in my teaching experience in the program) also expressed diverse interests in the world around them. These varied interests are especially related to social and world issues but also to relevant science and simple daily numeracy applications. I believe the delayed awakening and interests of these students are because of their delayed cognitive and social development and also an expression of their maturing and awakening to the world around them. Such interests should be encouraged and expressed in the curriculum whenever possible.

Because of the immaturity and dependence tendencies of many of the students, it is important for the instructors to provide a learning environment that is flexible. It should provide a transmissive environment (i.e., pedagogical approach where the instructor is seen as an all-knowing expert and the student as a passive recipient) when necessary, but also learning experiences with timely and adequate feedback that will nurture and encourage transformative learning (i.e., learning through the students’ own experience, reflection, and meaning making, including emotions and feeling).
The students in this study unequivocally, and loudly, expressed their need for enough time and patience for them to master new concepts and skills. Sometimes their goals are unrealistic, but I have often been amazed at their latent skills and potential when they are given adequate time and support. These students need a delicate balance of challenging learning opportunities coupled with realistic guidance.

The purpose of the CVP is to help the students build a sustainable bridge from their known academic world to the less known and sometimes frightening and almost impenetrable vocational world. The students' expressed enthusiasm for the vocational training aspect of the program is an expression of their strengthened self-confidence and growing independence that their participation in that aspect of the program provided. Any personal (such as counselling) and material (such as relevant curriculum) support that can be provided to enhance the vocational experience encourages motivation, participation, and retention.

I have found that in order to be successful, it is important to give the students early learning successes that they can build on. If they have banked some success, they are more likely to accept some bumps and failures along the way, provided that support and encouragement are also present. This is especially crucial in numeracy, where past success may have been limited. I have found it is also important to let them know that you too can make mistakes. Being able to laugh at me from time to time, especially when they are right and I am wrong, encourages them and takes the sting out of their own shortcomings. I try to instil in them that small failures along the way can lead to great successes. I have found this approach encourages the students, building bridges from what they feel they can’t do to what they can do.
In order for optimum learning to take place in any situation, it is important that all disabilities be recognized and accommodated to the best degree possible. Faculty need to create an environment that invites the students to feel safe in disclosing and working within their limitations (Purkey & Novak, 1996). An exciting factor in working with these exceptional individuals at this point in history is the expansion of new accommodating technologies, usually driven by the rapidly advancing digital and communications industries. All accommodations need to be individualized, whether laptops with accommodating writing tools or simple classroom adjustments such as expanded in-class work time or better sight lines for the hearing impaired to see the instructor.

The students should be encouraged to feel comfortable and safe within the learning environment early. Helping the students understand and become familiar with their physical environment, school and work routines, and establishing meaningful supportive relationships with peers and instructors needs to be emphasized and maintained early throughout all aspects of the learning experience. Capitalizing on positively strengthened instructor-student relationships and dedicated observation could help identify unrecognized or denied disabilities and behaviours that can affect motivation and retention. Further, supportive counselling should be made available to students in a timely fashion to help clarify and resolve student issues and needs. Any efforts towards improving and providing emotional, behavioural, and learning support through counselling, technology, or additional instructional support through educational assistants may increase the attention and
motivation of the student and help alleviate unnecessary barriers and fear in the
learning process.

I found the work-based program met the approval and needs of most of the
students interviewed, especially of those who were more emotionally mature, who
wanted to get out and participate in the workplace. A learning-centered environment
that provides practical work skills that the students can relate to their off-school work
placements will have a higher tendency for acceptance and participation. Each of the
students interviewed, as well as many of the students I have taught in the program,
have expressed individual interests, hopes, and dreams, but their learning experience
has often been a discouragement to them. Many of these interests fall within the
prescribed workplace curriculum, but others fall farther afield into curiosity, worldly
interests, and testing their limits in subjects they see as doors to a more secure and
better life. Actively listening to them and providing an opportunity to express their
"voice" and "desires" will strengthen their interests and help them buy into the
learning process, making it meaningful to them. As well, for those whose self-esteem
is low, having their voice and interests accepted and developed will help support their
feelings of "authenticity" within the college, providing an alternative to the feelings
of "impostership" that many of these students harbour.

There are students whose self-esteem and self-image are very low, and only
with the support and encouragement of significant others will these students begin to
feel it is worthwhile to invest time and effort into their own learning in substantive
amounts. For meaningful change and growth to take place, it is imperative that their
self-image improve. Purkey and Novak (1996) stress the importance of enhancing
self-concept and advocate that “schools should offer experiences that are intentionally designed to strengthen students’ self-efficacy beliefs” (p. 31). If they give the program and experiences enough time, small successes can lead to bigger ones. But as Alison identified, some of the students have their behaviours frozen in time, perhaps reflecting critical incident periods, and it takes a great deal of effort and perhaps new and positive “critical incidents” to encourage behaviour change. Purkey and Novak point out that it is possible for an individual to enhance their self-concept and state that “although self-concepts tend toward consistency, changes in self-concepts are possible” (p. 33).

Peers within and outside of the program can play an influential and positive or negative role in motivation, attitude, and participation with students of this age and maturity level. Positive, supportive, learning relationships in and out of the classroom should be encouraged and negative ones discouraged. It is important to remember that familial relationships (including siblings) can also have strong positive or negative influences on the student. Where possible, strong and effective communication between those individuals and the program in support of the students’ maturation, independence, and learning should be encouraged. However, it is imperative that this relationship foster self-sufficiency and independence in the students. It is crucial that all staff who are involved with these students present a united, professional, but genuine, caring attitude and interest in the students as worthwhile and capable individuals. All of these students have talents and capabilities, with many still being explored and developed. The early recognition and joyful feedback by significant others will encourage further learning efforts. The task
is to encourage the students to find the motivation within themselves to explore and develop their potential skills.

It must be remembered that these students are still maturing emotionally, are cognitively less mature, and their world experience is generally less broad than peers of the same age. Discouragement comes easily to these students, and learning takes the college vocational students additional time. The more concrete and world related the examples are, the more likely the students are to grasp new concepts and skills.

Discouraging teaching methods, such as long Socratic lectures that cause the students to lose concentration, should be avoided. The work should reflect the students' needs and interests and be challenging enough to get their attention. This is difficult because of their diverse abilities and achievement levels. This can be somewhat overcome by having classes with smaller groups, or separate classes according to abilities when the range of learning abilities is too great. Another possibility is separating students into groups according to maturity and interest in work as opposed to those less mature and not ready for the work environment. This may strengthen the participation of those who would like a stronger and quicker link to the work environment and less affiliation with those who demonstrate less mature and more juvenile behaviour. As well, it is important to provide a range of learning materials, exercises, and evaluation for their differing abilities and interests. For instance, wherever possible, hands-on materials that can be manipulated for demonstration purposes can give concrete support to enhance learning. I have found theory hard for most of these students to grasp and impossible for some. Listening to the students in casual conversations provides clues to their interests and desires in
their ever-changing societal milieu. This can inform the instructor and provide material that can be incorporated into the curriculum.

Work should be broken into learnable segments, with enough time and practice for completion, with progress seen as much as possible. Homework, likewise, should be kept to achievable levels academically and in reasonable amounts to avoid discouragement, keeping in mind that for many vocational students outside support may be minimal, outside interests and responsibilities may predominate, and their attention spans may be limited.

Because these students usually have short-term and long-term memory limitations, where possible, new work that reviews previous learning can act to reinforce those skills while supplying areas of success among the new challenges. Feedback during and after learning experiences should be realistic and frequent and encouraging as much as is possible. Slow learning and initial failure at some tasks can be presented positively as part of the learning process, a road to success, and not an end product.

The students and instructors in this study preferred interactive but moderately quiet and safe learning environments. Friendly, supportive peers tended to enhance the learning experience, but negative or distracting peers, even if they were friends, tended to interfere with both the learning experience and the enjoyment of it. The students and instructors were in agreement about disliking crowded classrooms and preferring a moderately spacious and a bright learning environment. I cannot emphasize enough that this environment needs to be supported by friendly, accepting,
and supportive instructors and peers. A breakdown in either of those areas can quickly lead to severe discouragement and lessening of motivational levels.

The success and interest of most of the students in both the academic and work-related aspects of the program confirms the validity and effectiveness of integrating the two otherwise separate academic and vocational components. The strong interest and emphasis of the students on vocational learning and hopeful employment aspects of the program indicate the need for a strong linkage between the academic skills and tasks and the work experience. Because the vocational opportunities are so varied, the content should be generic enough to meet the learning needs and be applicable for the students in prospective employment opportunities. This will require an open, ongoing exchange of potential teaching themes and strategies between the job coach and instructors to identify and meet any changing occupational needs. This necessitates a curriculum that is flexible and instructors who are willing to adjust and balance the curriculum, connecting and meeting both academic and vocational needs.

The students desire a voice in the content and process of academic and occupational learning. Recognizing, and involving their interests enhances their acceptance as legitimate students, supports a positive and worthwhile self-image, and perhaps most important, enhances their participation and motivation. Although the emphasis should be on tasks that enhance and support those skills most likely useful to and found in the workplace and in community living, the students also expressed an awareness and curiosity in other educational subjects and vocations. These interests, when integrated into the working curriculum, provide motivation for participation, and more important, recognition of the individuals and their interests.
Sometimes these diversions can be exploited for vocational goals exploration, giving the students further incentives to be actively involved. When the students' interests are incorporated, their feelings and their emotional investment is engaged, and this facilitates the student movement from an external stimulus of prescribed activities towards a greater internal stimulus of meaningful learning experiences. The students are at a turning point in their lives, and for those who are capable and ready, their increased emphasis and investment in learning will give them the momentum to launch into new directions of maturity, learning, and vocations.

For some students, their preference is to direct the majority of their attention to academic learning. Two reasons have emerged for this direction. In the first, the student is still at a maturity level that embraces the world of the classroom experience and may have difficulty visualizing functioning vocationally and launching out in new directions. These students are usually in the program at the urging of others, and they see the program as a natural gradation from their high school experience. Often they enter the program with a great deal of enthusiasm, but at times they become discouraged and poorly motivated. They may need more time to work on their academic and vocational skills while increasing their self-image, maturity, and personal independence before fully launching out into the working world. They generally need supportive counselling to that end and the support of significant others (usually parents) to encourage movement towards greater responsibility and independence. With this support, I have found the students usually progress, sometimes markedly. Without that support, and sometimes at odds with the program,
significant others (often parents) may discourage the process towards greater individual responsibility, independence, and possible working capabilities.

In the second group, the students have matured and become more independent, but they still do not feel adequately prepared to meet the expectations of the working world or an occupation they aspire to. Sometimes their occupational and academic goals are realistic, but sometimes they are beyond their cognitive or skills capabilities. They are usually not as cognitively challenged as their peers, but they may have some learning disabilities to cope with. This group also needs encouragement and guidance in the direction of choosing realistic goals. Guidance should begin in the classroom and be supported when necessary with individual counselling, but with the caveat that they are involved in the decisions and should be encouraged to explore what their limits are.

For all the students, learning activities in the program should be challenging but not overwhelming, thus helping the students to explore their limitations. Because the CVP students usually possess compromised memories and sometimes short attention spans, it is very important that feedback should be given to the student in a timely and judicious manner and reinforced when necessary. Feedback and rewards are strong motivators for the CVP students and should be presented as something concrete that they can readily relate to, such as written reports or extra privileges, but feedback can also be provided in the form of encouragement, such as praise for achievement. It should be present in all academic and behavioural endeavours as well as any work-related activities. Likewise, all the students are usually in need of initial and
sometimes long-term organizational support, both in the classroom and in the workplace.

As I have experienced, each class and student is different. Within the time and resources available, it is up to the instructor to assess which processes can be effectively employed and to what degree individually and as a group the various methods should be enacted. There are actions that instructors can do to improve their teaching and learning as well as the motivation of the students. Wlodkowsky (1985) indicates that if there is intervention at certain critical leaning periods, “particular motivational strategies will have maximum impact on the learners' motivation” (p. 60). Weimer (1990) proposes a five-step process for postsecondary level instructors on how they can improve student instruction and learning in the classroom. As I expressed in the theoretical framework section of Chapter One, these processes should value the students’ experiences and need for self-directedness as an integral part of their learning process.

**Implications for Further Research**

The students interviewed in this study were students who exhibited enough motivation and interest to continue in the program until its completion. There are a number of students who drop out each year, usually of their own volition and usually at the beginning of the program. Although some of these students drop out within the first few days of the first semester, others remain for several weeks and even months. From my observations, these early-leaving students are usually more socially mature and streetwise and sometimes more emotionally mature. It would be beneficial for a
future study to assess why those students choose not to continue participating in the program and what incentives could encourage them to continue their education.

It would be beneficial to conduct further research on the transformation process and the role of reflection in basic education students and students with learning disabilities. A greater understanding of this process in these students could be a guide to the type of curriculum and teaching methods that could be employed to support the learning of both vocational students and basic students in general. From my observations, students who are more cognitively capable, demonstrate a higher level of motivational participation, and have a greater maturity appear to have a greater propensity for transformational learning. Those who are less cognitively capable, are less mature, and express a minimal level of motivation seem the least capable of benefiting from reflection and the transformation process.

When I started this research project, I was asking myself, “How do I motivate my students?” Now I am asking the question, “How can I get them to tap into the motivation that is innate within them?” Research that would explore the optimal balance of effective and affective teaching practice could provide insight into more specific teaching strategies that would encourage student self-motivation and ultimately, long-term participation and academic success. Supporting an inquiry into effective and affective teaching approaches and research looking at the effectiveness of specific learning materials on learning progress and intrinsic vocational student motivation would strengthen teaching strategies and would encourage these students.

From my observations, the use of technology, such as the use of computers and related supportive software (such as Word Q), appears to encourage motivation and
participation. Some vocational students make use of the assistive technology more than others, and it seems to be more eagerly embraced for some subjects. The eager use of technology seems to enhance the motivation of some students whose motivation is demonstrated in class without the technology, but with other students, it appears to stimulate their interest and motivation, particularly when it provides a simple and easy solution to an obvious barrier to learning. Research comparing technology use and its motivational and learning outcomes in particular subjects and between effective and affective learning approaches would help direct the use of such costly technology more effectively. Research in the use of various technologies in comparison to the use of more traditional methods of instruction and learning would enhance our ability to deliver more effective instruction.

From my observations, the role of personal maturation and emotional development seems to have a huge effect on the interest and effort exerted by the students in the program. Research into the role and degree that personal maturation (i.e., cognitive, psychological, emotional, and social) influences vocational students' motivation would be of assistance in assessing potential success in a college program and aid in supportive counselling initiatives and curriculum development.

**Implications for Theory Development**

The findings of this study into the motivation of CVP students provide support and strengthen the theoretical base provided in Chapter One and in the literature review in Chapter Two. Two major models of learning theory were presented and supported in the literature, pedagogy and andragogy.
The first, pedagogy, or effective learning, is the connection of teaching by the teacher to the learning of the student, including the child and adult. In this model, Knowles (1995), describes the learner as a “dependent personality by definition” (p. 1), because the responsibility for all the learning is placed on the instructor while possessing and passing on all the knowledge. The student is also seen as having little experience to bring to the learning process. In this methodology, Knowles (1995, p. 1) indicates “it is the experience of the teachers, the textbook author, and the audiovisual aids producer that counts.” This is in contrast to John Dewey (cited in Demetrion, 2001) who believes that the ability to learn through experience is necessary for effective learning. The CVP students generally do have a more limited range of experiences to share and build on and are hindered by a range of disabilities. They also have limited confidence and experience in sharing what they do know, but they do “know” and are capable of sharing many of their important thoughts and experiences when given the opportunity.

In andragogy, the second model as described by Knowles (1984a, 1984b), there is a different set of assumptions and emphasis on adult learners about how adults learn and the methods and techniques used for effective adult instruction. This model of learning is more affective and transformative in practice and major assumptions of the learner are seen differently from that of the pedagogical, effective model. The concept of the “passive learner” assumed in the pedagogical model changes to that of a learner who is capable of self-direction. Knowles (1995) says that adults have a “need to be self-directing ...to be perceived by others and treated by others as able to take responsibility for themselves” (p. 2). The concept of the role of the learners'
experience also changes. The andragogical model assumes that the life experiences of the learner are relevant and can be a catalyst for further learning. This is in agreement with John Dewey (cited in Demetrion, 2001), who strongly advocated for a link between academic and vocational learning. For the CVP student, linking workplace experience with academic activities helps to give meaning to their learning while providing a sense of adult responsibility. According to Knowles, the andragogical model assumes “that adults enter into an educational activity with a greater volume and a different quality of experience than youths” (p. 2).

The CVP students present a unique challenge and opportunity for the instructor and program in order to meet their individualized learning needs. Chronologically, the CVP students are adults, but with varying degrees of maturity and cognitive abilities. They bring with them varied learning experiences, usually from strong pedagogical influences within and out of the classroom. The differences in their experiences and backgrounds point to the need for flexible planning and the conducting of educational activities. My interpretations of the data strongly indicate that the influences on motivation are diverse. This is consistent with Beder and Valentine (1990), who emphasize that it is important to recognize that motivation is multifaceted. With a wide diversity of students, coupled with the diverse influences on motivation, the need for flexibility that was expressed by both students and instructors becomes clearly apparent if the learning needs of all the students are to be met. Because of the diversity of learning needs and how we all learn (styles), Brookfield (1990) states that “the principle of diversity should be engraved on every teacher’s heart” (p. 69). My interpretations of the data also pointed to the impact of
negative influences and past failures on the students’ motivation to new learning experiences. Cross (1988), whose work is relevant to the motivation of students disillusioned by past educational experiences, addresses this issue by supporting individualized learning. Time and resources will be a limiting factor in such an approach, but a flexible curriculum and evaluation taking into account multiple participatory variables can be a strong encourager, helping the student believe they can succeed.

Both the pedagogical and andragogical models are relevant in the classrooms and can be implemented simultaneously. When new learning material and skills are introduced that the learner has had no previous experience to build on, or Socratic and/or hands-on instruction would be preferable for safety concerns, this leaves the learner in a dependent position, and the pedagogical method may be preferable. Knowles (1995) is in agreement that in this type of situation “the pedagogical assumption of dependency is realistic, and pedagogical strategies are appropriate” (p. 3). When the learner has sufficient experience and knowledge to contribute to the responsibility of their own learning, the andragogical model may be an effective method for sustained interest and learning retention.

Brookfield (1986), who is critical of a nondirective resource approach, feels that large amounts of self-directedness are not found in the average student. This has certainly been true of my experience with CVP students and with other student bodies as well. Brookfield proposes a transactional approach in which the experiences of the students, combined with their learning needs, should become an integral part of the learning program. He suggests that “the enhancement of self-directedness is the
proper purpose of education” (pp. 94-95), but it is also important not to disregard the “reflective domain” (p. 99) or forget that adults sometimes learn for the joy of leaning. The CVP students in the interviews and in my classroom experience demonstrate indications of reflective actions and transformative capabilities by their willingness to reassess and sometimes change to new conduct that is contrary to previous behaviours. Cranton (1994) indicates that “in transformative learning theory, an adult’s psychological and cognitive development is marked by an increased ability to validate prior learning through reflection and to act on the insights obtained. The person moves toward more inclusive, differentiated, open, and integrated meaning perspectives” (pp. 27-28). From my experience, the extent of these abilities is determined primarily by emotional maturity and cognitive abilities but also to some extent by the input and direction by supportive significant others who encourage reflection.

However, some scholars believe that there are other factors to consider and that not all learning and abilities are thought solely to be a reflection of a logical cognitive domain. Howard Gardner (1983) stresses this point when he argues that everyone has at least eight intelligences (and probably more) that blend into a unique cognitive profile in each individual. In my experience with the CVP students, there are indications of several of the intelligences suggested by Gardner beyond the logical-mathematical that are usually assumed to be necessary for meaningful abilities and success by our society. Traditionally, the formal education system in North America has been based on the demonstration of capacity in reading, writing, and arithmetic (only three of the intelligences identified by Gardner). While weak in these
intelligences, some of the CVP students demonstrated considerable strength in others. Frank (p. 3) indicated he had an interest and ability to play a musical instrument. Gail (p. 3) participated in martial arts, demonstrating a skilled body-kinaesthetic ability. In my CVP classes, I have found students who possess gifted intrapersonal and interpersonal abilities. All of these individuals would be seen as demonstrating a very poor logical-mathematical intelligence. Rhonda, a student in my present teaching year, regularly demonstrated a pronounced spatial ability. She has learned to sketch quite well with a pencil and sketch pad. She also demonstrated her spatial ability as well as a sense of colour balance in her written notes and projects, producing neat and well laid out documents. She has been able to do this while taking skilful advantage of the capabilities of computer software, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint. Rhonda also indicated she can play the trumpet, indicating a musical intelligence, but has had to give that up for the time being until her braces are removed. Because of her disabilities, Rhonda has severely limited use and strength in her left arm. Rhonda is an exceptional example of many of the CVP students who struggle with their disabilities and compensate with their other strengths. Although her strength in the logical-mathematical domain is limited and disabilities leave her left side weak, she demonstrates considerable strength in the spatial and kinaesthetic domains, producing neat and attractive documents and being surprisingly agile, humbling me regularly on the badminton court. With her written permission, Appendix H includes a sample of Rhonda’s work.

Students like Rhonda need to be given opportunities to discover and use their varied abilities (intelligences) in educational programs to support their motivation and
participation. Their strengths are usually what they like to do, because they can perform successfully in these areas and obtain recognition for that. It gives them an opportunity to excel and shine in the limelight, an opportunity not always afforded them on a day-to-day basis in the formal education environment. Encouraging the students to identify and use their strengths that they feel more comfortable with will strengthen motivation and participation. Working with and building the students’ strong intelligences, especially in a vocationally enhanced program, will provide encouragement to strengthen and expand competencies and help with the planning and preparation for future vocational choices.

This suggests that further theory development related to the use of strong multiple intelligences to compensate for weak intelligences to achieve academic and life success would be extremely valuable.

As indicated by my interpretations of the data, as new experiences and successes within the students’ academic, work, and personal lives increased, so did the need and recognition for increased self-directedness. Virtually all of the CVP students (as all students) are to some degree dependent on the program and instructors with respect to what curriculum and skills are relevant for their success. Many of the CVP students, particularly those with strong cognitive limitations and/or strong parental controlling interests, present strong dependent personalities and initially prefer and need the pedagogical approach. Although the CVP students may present and be in control of different aspects of their lives (especially some of the more mature and streetwise), they usually do not have the organizational skills, discipline, or maturity to be self-directed learners. Sometimes they don’t want the responsibility
for learning decisions or to put in the extra and substantial effort that would entail. It is easier for them to have someone else make all the decisions. This may be because of poor decisions in the past with negative consequences and/or a lack of opportunities, but now they feel it is much easier and safer to forgo that responsibility.

It is imperative for growth towards independence, greater maturity, and self-esteem that strong and progressive efforts in the learning process promote independent learning and living by inviting the students to take ownership of as much of their learning as they are capable. My interpretations of the data show by the varied interests of the students both in and out of the classroom that many of the students want the opportunity to take charge of some aspects of their learning and lives. When they are not able to do so, there is often a build-up of frustration, leading to resentment, resistance, and reduced motivation because they feel they are not in charge of their own destiny.

As the program and growth and maturity of the students progress, the andragogical transformative and transmissive models through their affective learning approach can be encouraged and supported with appropriate learning materials and resources. This is indicated in the research findings, where both the CVP students and the faculty expressed the desire and need for learning flexibility. Knowles (1995) emphasizes that the “andragogical model assumes that adults become ready to learn when they experience a need to know or be able to do something to perform more effectively in some aspect of their lives” (p. 2). My data found that the students expressed the need to learn by linking their presence in the program and their
participation in the activities, to their long-term goals of completing the program and obtaining employment. This process appeared to be stronger in those who were more mature and aware of their potential goals while in the program. Those who remained fixed in a dependency mode demonstrated a lack of the sense of confidence and freedom to take responsibility for their own learning, thus hindering their ability to take advantage of the more reciprocal learning found in pure andragogical transmissive and transformative processes. For those adult learners with more limiting cognitive, psychological, emotional, or social restrictions that promote dependency, moving to a more independent “educational activity with a life-, task-, or problem-centered orientation to learning” (Knowles, p. 3) will prove more difficult. For most CVP students, a transactional approach, as proposed by Brookfield (1986), may have the most relevance. I have found that most students, no matter what their abilities, have the capacity and desire in personal interests and learning pursuits beyond that presented by myself as an instructor. Knowles, while acknowledging the importance of external motivators, proposes that “the more important motivators are internal” (p. 3). The findings support this proposition and are very influential on student participation. This is shown in the strong motivational themes identified, such as relationships and self-esteem, and the emotional connections of subthemes such as negative labelling, to themes such as hindrances.

This suggests that further exploration on the impact of differing maturity levels of learners on the models of both pedagogy and andragogy would be useful.

The CVP students present varied personalities and abilities, complex disabilities and limitations, and slower maturation into emotional and physical adulthood. Their
special needs backgrounds have fostered varying dependencies, including those supported in pedagogical learning environments. Some students do exhibit an interest in the ownership of their own learning upon entering the CVP program. Because the program aims to prepare the students to obtain and retain employment, there are prescribed courses and learning objectives to assist the students in meeting employment goals. Because of the complexity of student needs, variation of learning styles, overall goals of the program, instructor needs, and available resources, designing the program and the courses it employs must accommodate these and a myriad of other requirements.

Knowles (1995) outlines two theoretical approaches for the design of educational programs, with the pedagogical model following a content design format and the andragogical model following the process design format. The content design requires the instructor to decide “what content needs to be covered; how can this content be organized into manageable units; what is the most logical sequence for presenting these units; and what is the most efficient means of transmitting this content” (p. 4). In the process design, the facilitator (the term preferred by Knowles over teacher) “designs and manages procedures that will facilitate the acquisition of content by the learners, ... and he or she will act as a content resource” (p. 4). Because of the often strong dependency needs of the CVP students, aspects of the pedagogical model must be employed in the overall program design because the CVP students have limited skills at facilitating or expressing their own content needs when entering the program. Also important is the recognition that there are limited resources and program time, requiring a pedagogical approach at times in order to
maximize the available academic, vocational, and counselling support. These students commonly have both short-term and long-term memory limitations and thus need instruction and review of basic skills in order to progress in more advanced course content. In support of the students’ readiness and need for self-direction for their learning interests, needs, and styles, in parallel with the content design model, the process design can also be employed, as realistically appropriate, as a means of supporting maturation, confidence, and skills in the classroom. It is of paramount importance that both these processes be employed simultaneously to maximize the growth and maturity of these adult students academically and vocationally, and most important, that they be made to feel encouraged and a sense that they can be successful (Purkey & Novak, 1996).

This also suggests the exploration of another aspect, that is, the role of diverse learning styles on the content and process theories.

**Summary**

My interpretations of the findings in this study indicate that the small group of students and faculty in the College Vocational Program (CVP) that was the focus of this study and who participated in this study perceive motivation to be very important to student success and that there are multiple factors that influence the motivation and participation of the CVP students. These factors, both personal and environmental, are critical to participation, retention, and academic success, and influence motivation well before the students are accepted into the program and remain critically influential for the duration of the students’ experience in college.
Although we cannot generalize from the findings, they do provide some useful insights on how the learning success of these students can be enhanced through our increased understanding of factors that motivate and demotivate these students. The study provides strong added value to what we already know about adult student learning and motivation. It also provides an additional dimension and insight into the needs, aspirations, and motivational influences of CVP students that can affect their maturation and growth towards their successful completion of the program and towards greater independence.
References

http://www.orpha.net/data/patho/GB/uk-asperger.pdf


Mayo Clinic. Asperger's Syndrome [On-line].
http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/aspergers-syndrome/DS00551/DSECTION=1

http://ehostvgw18.epnet.com/delivery.asp?deliveryoption=Citation+with+formatted+full+text


http://ehostvgw20.epnet.com/delivery.asp?deliveryoption=Citation+with+formatted+full+text&


Retrieved on the World Wide Web:

http://duke.usask.ca/~schenstb/motivation_paper/motivation.htm


Appendix A

Interview Questions For Students

Introduction: Background
1. Please give some background about yourself, such as what school you went to before you came to Seneca and what subjects you took.
2. How successful do you think you were in this school?
3. Were there many students in your classes and at your school? Are any of them still your friends, and have any of them attended this program?
4. Are there any teachers that stick out in your mind, and why do you think they do?
5. Tell me about one learning situation in high school or elementary school that you can recall, such as being fun, not fun, easy, hard.
6. What responsibilities do you have outside of your school commitments?

Seneca College Background
1. Can you describe when and how you first heard of the CVP program and any feelings you first had about it?
2. Who, or what, influenced your interest in taking the CVP program?
3. Can you explain for me why you decided to take the program?
4. What has encouraged you to stay in the program, and why did you not drop out?
5. What are your thoughts and feelings about being a student here at the college, and have those thoughts changed in any way in the past year?
6. Have you made any new friends at college, and are any of these relationships with students in other college programs?
7. When you decided to come to the program, what part of the program was of most interest to you (academic, work, social), and can you explain why?
8. What can you tell me about your personal independence and responsibility since starting college, and any changes that may have taken place?
9. What does being successful in college mean to you?

Learning
1. Please explain what learning means to you.
2. What type of things have you had success learning in the past, and why do you think you were successful?
3. What type of things have you not had success in learning in the past, and why do you think you were not successful?
4. What do you tend to do, when you cannot do or learn something?
5. Do you have any disabilities, and if so, what are they, and how do they affect you?
6. What are your learning strengths, and how do they help you learn?
7. What type of atmosphere (things, activities, or people) do you like in a classroom, and in your work placement?
8. What type of atmosphere (things, activities, or people) discourage you from wanting to participate?
9. When is your preferred time for doing your work? Why do you think you take this approach?
10. Can you describe any goals or plans you have for the future? Are you receiving adequate support in this area, and what additional support might be helpful to you?

**Placement**
1. How successful do you think your work placement will be, and can you explain why?
2. Can you tell me a little about your schedule and some of the things you do throughout your workday?
3. How do you generally react when you are asked to do something by your supervisor, job coach, or other workers?
4. When at your placement, do you have a tendency to wait for instructions from your supervisor, or do you tend to go ahead and do the job on your own? Can you explain why you take this approach?
5. When you are shown how to do something new on the job that you do not know how to do, how does that situation make you feel?
6. What are your thoughts and feelings about your learning and progressing in your placements?
7. In what ways, and by whom, are you encouraged on the job? Can you think of any examples?
8. Can you explain how you feel your job coach and employers see you as a worker?

**Work Placement Class**
1. Tell me a little about your work placement class and its purpose.
2. If you had a choice of being in this class, in another class, or at your work placement, which would you choose, and why?
3. Which of the activities in the class did you find helpful in learning new things, and which ones did you find discouraging and not wanting to learn?
4. Tell me about where you sit in class, who is near you, and why you have chosen to sit there.
5. Please explain when, how, and with whom you do your homework.
6. How would you define being successful in your work placement class?

**Learning in Academic Classes**
1. Of all your academic classes, which ones have you enjoyed participating in most, and what made them the most enjoyable?
2. Of all your classes, which ones were the least enjoyable, and what do you think were the reasons for this?
3. When I mention the word homework, what feelings does this word bring up, and can you tell me a story or experience about you and homework?
4. Throughout the past year, did you complete most of the work assigned? If you did finish all of it, why? If you did not finish all of it, why?
5. Who do you think influenced you the most to keep up with your placement work and school work?
6. In school, do you tend to work ahead with your work, or do you prefer to catch up? Can you explain why?
Interview Questions For Instructors/Job Coach

Introduction: Background
1. Please give some background about yourself as an instructor, such as what you see as your responsibilities as an instructor/job coach.
2. How do you see the students as being successful with you as an instructor/coach and as being successful in the program?
3. Please explain what you feel is the meaning or definition of motivation.
4. How do you see students in terms of their individual responses to motivation? Can you give any examples of student responses?
5. How do you think the students see themselves in regards to their own motivation?
6. When you think of student motivation, are there any motivational examples that stick out in your mind, and can you explain why do you think they do?
7. What factors have you found that encourage CVP students to learn, and can you explain why you think they are effective?
8. What factors do you think might discourage students to learn, and can you give any examples?

Seneca College Background
1. Who, or what, have you noticed as having influenced the students in taking the CVP program?
2. From your experience, what factors have encouraged the students to stay in the program, and are there any that play an observable significant role?
3. What factors have you observed that have discouraged the students from staying in the program, and are there any that play a prominent role?
4. Can you explain how your role as a instructor/job coach influences your relationship with the students? Is there an influence in their, or your, motivation in any way?
5. Have you noticed the significance of any other roles that you or others may have that influence the motivation of the CVP students?
6. Have you observed any part of the program as being of most interest to some or all of the students, and can you explain why you have come to this conclusion?
7. What can you tell me about the personal independence and maturation of the students as they participate in the program?
8. What can you tell me about any motivational changes you have observed by the students, as they progressed in the program? Can you explain your observations?

Learning
1. Please explain what student learning means to you.
2. What type of things or situations have you had success helping the students learn in the past, and why do you think you were successful?
3. What type of things or situations have you not had success in helping the students learn in the past, and why do you think you were not successful?
4. From your experience, what are some of the disabilities that the students bring to the program, and how do you feel they affect the students’ learning and motivation? How do these disabilities affect your approach to teaching, and your motivation?
5. Is there a preferable environment and atmosphere that is conducive for the CVP students to learn and be motivated, and can you explain why?
6. Can you explain any environment and atmosphere factors that you feel would discourage the students from wanting to participate?
7. Do you have any other comments or insights into student motivation that you feel might be of assistance in understanding the motivation of the CVP student?

**Placement/Job Coach**

1. How do you see the students as being successful in their work placement, and can you explain why?
2. In what ways, and by whom, are the students encouraged on the job?
3. In what ways does the motivational level of the student influence their success or failure in the work placement?
4. From your observations, how do the requests and reactions of yourself, supervisors, and other workers affect the motivations of the student?
5. From your observations, how do the reactions of the student to work duties affect their motivation on the job?
6. Can you explain some of the influences, in the work placement and outside of the placement, that affect the student job placement performance?
7. Have you observed any differences or similarities in the students’ performance in the classroom environment and workplace environment? Can you explain?
8. Do you have any other comments or insights into student motivation that you feel might be of assistance in understanding the motivation of the CVP student?
Appendix B
Brock University Department of Education
Information Letter to Instructor/Job Coach

Date: ________________________________ REB File#

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting

Researchers: M.Ed. Student (Lewis Broyden) and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)

Dear Instructor/Job Coach:

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Education Degree from Brock University, I am required to complete a research project that addresses important educational issues. I am inviting College Vocational Program (CVP) instructors and students to participate in an exciting research study that will be conducted by me under the direction of my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen.

The purpose of this proposed study is to increase our understanding of the motivation of vocational students in a college setting. The findings will provide an increase in understanding the motivational profile of CVP and similar students, which will provide valuable knowledge for teaching and learning. No physical or psychological harm to participants is anticipated. As part of the requirements for this study, participants will be asked to participate in one or more open-ended interviews of about one hour each. I am asking for your consent to participate in an interview and to analyze the content of your responses for the purposes of my study. Participation in this study is voluntary and participants may refrain from responding to any question they do not wish to answer and may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation or penalty.

I am employed by the College as an academic instructor in the CVP program, but I do not instruct any CVP students in their fourth semester; thus I will not be instructing, or have any counselling, supervisory or authority relationship with any student participating in the research now or in the future. I do not, and will not have a line relationship or evaluative authority with any of the instructors/job coach taking part in the research.

The study has been reviewed and received approval through the Research Ethics Board of Brock University and the College’s Research Committee. All data collected will be kept confidential and securely locked in a file cabinet for the 5 years required by Brock University and will then be destroyed. Only I as the researcher, and my project supervisor will have access to the data. None of the participants will be
identifiable in any reporting of the findings. There may be instances where instructors or student participants may wish to communicate with me using e-mail. Since the e-mails will be sent through the College Intranet, there is a very small risk that anonymity on these communications cannot be guaranteed.

A summary of the findings of this study will be made available to participants upon your written request to my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca (Appendix D) and through the College’s professional development department located at its main campus.

If you agree to participate, please read and sign the attached Informed Consent form and return it to my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen, Newnham Campus, Seneca College, who will maintain it in confidence.
Brock University Department of Education  
Information Letter to Potential Student Participants

Date: ____________________________

REB File# ______________________

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting

Researchers: M.Ed. Student (Lewis Broyden) and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)

Dear Student Participant:

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Education Degree from Brock University, I am required to complete a research project that addresses important educational issues. I am inviting College Vocational Program (CVP) instructors and students to participate in an exciting research study that will be conducted by me under the direction of my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen.

The purpose of this proposed study is to increase our understanding of the motivation of vocational students in a college setting. The findings will provide an increase in understanding the motivational profile of CVP and similar students, which will provide valuable knowledge for teaching and learning. No physical or psychological harm to participants is anticipated. As part of the requirements for this study, participants will be asked to participate in one or more open-ended interviews of about one hour each. I am asking for your agreement to be interviewed and your permission to analyze the content of your responses for the purposes of my study. Participation in this study is voluntary and you may refrain from responding to any question you do not wish to answer and may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation or penalty.

I am employed by the College as an academic instructor in the CVP program, but I do not instruct any CVP students in their fourth semester; thus I will not be instructing, or have any counselling, supervisory or authority relationship with any student participating in the research now or in the future. I do not have and will not have a line relationship or evaluative authority with any of the instructors taking part in the research.

The study has been reviewed and received ethics approval through the Research Ethics Board of Brock University and the College’s Research Committee. All data collected will be kept confidential and securely locked in a file cabinet for the 5 years required by Brock University and will then be destroyed. Only I as the researcher, and my project supervisor, will have access to the data. None of the participants will be identifiable in any reporting of the findings. There may be instances where
instructors or student participants may wish to communicate with me using e-mail. Since the e-mails will be sent through the College Intranet, there is a very small risk that anonymity on these communications cannot be guaranteed.

A summary of the findings of this study will be made available to participants upon your written request to my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca (Appendix D) and through the College’s professional development department.

If you agree to participate, please read and sign the attached Informed Consent form and return it to my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen, Newnham Campus, Seneca College, who will maintain it in confidence.
Brock University Department of Education
Information Letter to Potential Participants

Date: ____________________

REB File#

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting

Researchers: M.Ed. Student (Lewis Broyden) and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)

Dear Parent/Guardian:

In partial fulfilment of the requirements for a Master of Education Degree from Brock University, I am required to complete a research project that addresses important educational issues. I am inviting College Vocational Program (CVP) instructors and students to participate in an exciting research study that will be conducted by me under the direction of my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen.

The purpose of this proposed study is to increase our understanding of the motivation of vocational students in a college setting. The findings will provide an increase in understanding the motivational profile of CVP and similar students, which will provide valuable knowledge for teaching and learning. No physical or psychological harm to participants is anticipated. As part of the requirements for this study, participants will be asked to participate in one or more open-ended interviews of about one hour each. I am asking for your permission to interview your son/daughter and to analyze the content of his/her responses for the purposes of my study. Participation in this study is voluntary and participants may refrain from responding to any question they do not wish to answer and may withdraw from the study at any time without explanation or penalty.

I am employed by the College as an academic instructor in the CVP program, but I do not instruct any CVP students in their fourth semester; thus I will not be instructing, or have any counselling, supervisory, or authority relationship with any student participating in the research now or in the future. I do not have and will not have a line relationship or evaluative authority with any of the instructors taking part in the research.

The study has been reviewed and received ethics approval through the Research Ethics Board of Brock University and the College’s Research Committee. All data collected will be kept confidential and securely locked in a file cabinet for the 5 years required by Brock University and will then be destroyed. Only I as the researcher, and my project supervisor, will have access to the data. None of the participants will be identifiable in any reporting of the findings. There may be instances where instructors or student participants may wish to communicate with me using e-mail.
Since the e-mails will be sent through the College Intranet, there is a very small risk that anonymity on these communications cannot be guaranteed.

A summary of the findings of this study will be made available to participants upon your written request to my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca (Appendix D) and through the College’s professional development department.

If you agree to allow your son/daughter participate, please read and sign the attached Informed Consent form and return it to my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen, Newnham Campus, Seneca College, 1750 Finch Ave. E., Toronto, M2J 2X5, who will maintain it in confidence.
Appendix C

Brock University Department of Education
Consent Form: For Instructor/Job Coach Participants

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting
Researchers: M.Ed. Student (Lewis Broyden) and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)
Brock Ethics Review File No.

Name of Instructor Participant: (please print) __________________________

I understand that the purpose of this proposed study is to increase our understanding of the motivation of vocational students in a college setting. Through interviews, we will be looking at the various dimensions of motivation suggested and exhibited by the students who are, and have participated in the CVP program. I fully understand the reasons for and consent to be interviewed. I also understand that the researchers have no counselling/ supervisory or authority relationship with me at this time or in the future. I understand that participation in the research study is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason(s) without explanation or penalty of any kind, and I am free to not answer any questions that I do not wish to answer. I understand that if there is any e-mail communication sent through the College Intranet, there is a very small risk that anonymity of these communications cannot be guaranteed.

I agree to allow my interview to be audio taped and transcribed. I grant my permission for the researchers to analyze my reflective responses, which is a requirement for the purposes of the research project. I understand that only the researchers named above will have access to the data.

I understand that all data will be kept strictly confidential and secure. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. While the findings may be presented or published in appropriate professional publications and conferences, no participant will be identifiable in any reporting of the data or findings.

Participant's Signature: __________________________ Date: ________________

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Lewis Broyden at 416 491 5050 ext 2900 (lewis.broyden@senecac.on.ca) or Dr. Katharine Janzen at 416 491 5050 ext 2080 (katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca) or Ms Debra Van Oosten, Brock University Ethics Research Officer at 905 688-5550 Ext 3035.
Feedback on the findings will be available to you in the Professional Development Dept. at the main campus of this college or upon request to my supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen.

I have fully explained the procedures of this study to the above volunteer

Researcher's Signature: _______________ Date: __________
Brock University Department of Education
Consent Form: For Student Participants

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting
Researchers: M.Ed. Student (Lewis Broyden) and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)
Brock Ethics Review File No.

Name of Student Participant: (please print) ________________________

I understand that the purpose of this proposed study is to increase the understanding of the motivation of vocational students in a college setting. Through interviews, we will be looking at the various dimensions of motivation suggested and exhibited by the students who are, and have participated in the program. I fully understand the reasons for and agree to be interviewed. I also understand that I am not being instructed by the researchers, and that they will have no counselling/supervisory or authority relationship with me at this time or in the future. I understand that there is no obligation for me to answer any questions or participate in any aspect of this project, and that my participation or nonparticipation in this study will not affect my progress in the CVP program in any way. I understand that participation in the research study is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason(s) without explanation or penalty of any kind, and I am free to not answer any questions that I do not wish to answer. I understand that if there are any e-mail communication sent through the College Intranet, there is a very small risk that anonymity of these communications cannot be guaranteed.

I agree to allow my interview to be audio taped and transcribed. I grant my permission for the researchers to analyze my reflective responses, which is a requirement for the purposes of the research project. I understand that only the researchers named above will have access to the data.

I understand that all data will be kept strictly confidential and secure. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. While the findings may be presented or published in appropriate professional publications and conferences, no participant will be identifiable in any reporting of the data or findings.

Participant's Signature: ________________________ Date: ________________

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Lewis Broyden at 416 491 5050 ext 2900 (lewis.broyden@senecac.on.ca) or Dr. Katharine Janzen at 416 491 5050 ext 2080 (katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca) or Ms Debra Van Oosten, Brock University Ethics Research Officer at 905 688-5550 Ext 3035.
Feedback on the findings will be available to you in the Professional Development Dept. at the main campus of this college or upon request to my supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen.

I have fully explained the procedures of this study to the above volunteer

Researcher's Signature: ______________ Date: ______________
Brock University Department of Education  
Consent Form: For Parent/Guardian

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting  
Researchers: M.Ed. Student (Lewis Broyden) and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)  
Brock Ethics Review File No.

Name of Student: (please print) ____________________________

Name of Parent/Guardian: (please print) ____________________________

I understand that the purpose of this proposed study is to increase the understanding of the motivation of vocational students in a college setting. Through interviews, the researchers will be looking at the various dimensions of motivation suggested and exhibited by the students who are, and have participated in the program.

I fully understand the reasons for and consent to the interview of my son/daughter, named above. I understand that participation in the research study is completely voluntary and that he/she may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason(s) without explanation or penalty of any kind, and he/she are free to not answer any questions that they do not wish to answer. I understand that if there are any e-mail communication sent through the College Intranet, there is a very small risk that anonymity or these communications cannot be guaranteed.

I agree to allow my son’s/daughter’s interview to be audio taped and transcribed. I grant my permission for the researchers to analyze my son’s/daughter’s interview responses. I understand that only the researchers named above will have access to the data.

I understand that all data will be kept strictly confidential and secure. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity. While the findings may be presented or published in appropriate professional publications and conferences, no participant will be identifiable in any reporting of the data or findings.

Parent/Guardian Signature: ____________________________ Date: ________________

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Lewis Broyden at 416 491 5050 ext 2900 (lewis.broyden@senecac.on.ca) or Dr. Katharine Janzen at 416 491 5050 ext 2080 (katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca) or Ms Debra Van Oosten, Brock University Ethics Research Officer at 905 688-5550 Ext 3035.
Feedback on the findings will be available to you in the Professional Development Dept. at the main campus of this college or upon request to my supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen.

I have fully explained the procedures of this study to the parent/guardian.

Researcher's Signature: __________________ Date: ____________
Brock University Department of Education
Consent Form: For Student Participants

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting
Researchers: M.Ed. Student (Lewis Broyden) and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)
Brock Ethics Review File No.

Name of Student Participant: (please print) ________________________

I understand that the purpose of this proposed study is to increase the understanding of the motivation of vocational students in a college setting. The study will be looking at the various dimensions of motivation suggested and exhibited by the students who are, and have participated in the program. I fully understand the reasons for and agree to allow my sketches in the thesis. I understand that there is no obligation for me to answer any questions or participate in any aspect of this project, and that my participation or nonparticipation in this study will not affect my progress in the CVP program in any way. I understand that participation in the research study is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason(s) without explanation or penalty of any kind, and I am free to not answer any questions that I do not wish to answer. I understand that if there are any e-mail communication sent through the College Intranet, there is a very small risk that anonymity of these communications cannot be guaranteed.

I grant my permission for the researchers to analyze and comment on the importance of my sketches, which is a requirement for the purposes of the research project. I understand that only the researchers named above will have access to the data.

I understand that all data will be kept strictly confidential and secure. I understand that every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and anonymity, and that my name will be replaced in the reported findings with a pseudonym. While the findings may be presented or published in appropriate professional publications and conferences, no participant will be identifiable in any reporting of the data or findings.

Participant's Signature: ________________ Date: __________

If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact Lewis Broyden at 416 491 5050 ext 2900 (lewis.broyden@senecac.on.ca) or Dr. Katharine Janzen at 416 491 5050 ext 2080 (katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca) or Ms Debra Van Oosten, Brock University Ethics Research Officer at 905 688-5550 Ext 3035.

Feedback on the findings will be available to you in the Professional Development Dept. at the main campus of this college or upon request to my supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen.

I have fully explained the procedures of this study to the above volunteer.

Researcher's Signature: ________________ Date: __________
Appendix D

Brock University Department of Education
Feedback to Participants

Date: __________________________

Title of Study: The Motivation of Vocational Students in a College Setting

Researchers: Lewis Broyden and Dr. Katharine Janzen (Faculty Supervisor)

Dear Participant:

Thank you for contributing to my study that explored the motivation of vocational students in a college setting.

The purpose of this study was to look at the various dimensions of motivation suggested and exhibited by the students who have participated in the program. The findings will enable the CVP instructors to be more aware of the motivational difficulties and strengths of CVP students, while providing pertinent data for enhanced planning, instruction, and learning activities.

A summary of the findings of this study will be made available in January 2004 to you upon written request to my project supervisor, Dr. Katharine Janzen

katharine.janzen@senecac.on.ca as well as through the professional development dept. at the colleges' main campus.

Your time and input is greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

Lewis Broyden
M.Ed. Student
Appendix E

Brock University Department of Education
Motivational Levels of CVP Students

Motivational Levels of CVP Students

Beder and Valentine (1990) define the concept of motivation as “the basic reasons, which lead learners to participate” (p. 79). Schenstead (1997) refers to motivation as “a person’s inner ‘wellspring of energy,’ which is directed toward constructive goals” (p. 1).

With these definitions as a reference, and in order to help my participant selection...

Please name five CVP students in each category that you feel have demonstrated Low, Medium, or High motivation levels, as you perceive them. Please list them under the appropriate motivational level column. (e.g., Low indicates a small, sporadic effort and participation in learning activities; Medium indicates an average effort and participation level; High indicates an elevated consistent effort and participation.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>High</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your efforts, and helping me with my research.

Lewis Broyden
# Appendix F

## Theme Codebook

### Student Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Themes Influencing Motivation And Colour Coding</th>
<th>Second Level Themes</th>
<th>Third Level Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attitude (Plum)</td>
<td>• Student—Positive</td>
<td>• Coasting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student—Negative</td>
<td>• Refusing Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Know-It-All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Persistent—Wanting Success</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Compliance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotions (Red)</td>
<td>• Negative Feelings</td>
<td>• Pride—Embarrassed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Positive Feelings</td>
<td>• Very Enthusiastic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Fear—Insecure/Defensive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Giving Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Avoidance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Feeling Up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Bored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment (Orange)</td>
<td>• Supportive</td>
<td>• Friendly/Safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Unsupportive</td>
<td>• Fun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Atmosphere</td>
<td>• Student/Teacher Friendly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindrances (Dark Red)</td>
<td>• Lack of Support</td>
<td>• Dislikes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disabilities</td>
<td>• Not Understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Negative Labelling/Putdowns</td>
<td>• Denial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work—too hard/too easy</td>
<td>• Not Taking Responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fear of Making a Mistake</td>
<td>• Self-Destructive Behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tired/Bored</td>
<td>• Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attitude—Poor</td>
<td>• Time-Insufficient/Inconvenient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Memory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests (Light Yellow)</td>
<td>• CVP Program</td>
<td>• Graduation/Credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vocation/Getting a Job</td>
<td>• Work Placement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Financial/Rewards</td>
<td>• Challenging School Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Courses</td>
<td>• Further Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Outside Interests</td>
<td>• Experience and Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Friends</td>
<td>• Fun/Easy Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Relevant Materials/Exercises</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Social Activities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Learning (Purple) | • Experiences Positive  
• Experiences Negative  
• Meaning For Students | • Wanting To Learn/Interests  
• Time  
• Materials/Hands-On  
• Instructors |
|------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| Maturity (Dark Green) | • Independence  
• Dependence  
• Seen As Adult | • Positive Change  
• Seeing Future  
• Feeling As Adult  
• Taking Responsibilities |
| Motivation (Aqua) | • Demonstrated  
• Internal Motivators  
• External Motivators  
• Relationships  
• Work/Success | • Rewards/Awards  
• Pleasing  
• Helping  
• Finishing  
• Not Finishing  
• Passive (Responses)  
• No Other Alternatives/Fear |
| Relationships (Light Blue) | • Peers (Positive)  
• Peers (Negative)  
• Parents/Family  
• Instructors (Positive)  
• Instructors (Negative)  
• Work Supervisor | • Peers outside program  
• Working with people  
• Working alone  
• Instructors--other schools  
• People liked/missed |
| Self-Awareness (Dark Yellow) | • Knowing/Unaware of Limitations/Disabilities  
• Life-Changes | • Denial |
| Self-Image (Dark Blue) | • Self-Esteem/Confidence  
• Abilities—Positive/Negative  
• Image of Self (Physical Attributes) | • Failure  
• Realistic/Unrealistic  
• Vocation—Related To |
| Successful (Light Green) | • Achievement Successful  
• Achievement Difficult  
• Student Definition Of Success | • New Skills  
• Failure  
• Doing a Good Job  
• Completing Tasks |
| Support (Dark Pink) | • Instructors  
• Supervisors  
• Parents  
• Peers | • Program  
• Hands-on-materials  
• Time-sufficient  
• Technology  
• Lack of Support  
• General (Not specific)  
• Guidance Counselling  
• Feedback  
• New Experiences  
• Tutor |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary Themes Influencing Motivation And Colour Highlight</th>
<th>Second Level Themes</th>
<th>Third Level Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Attitudes (Plum)</strong></td>
<td>• Giving Up on Self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Instructor Attitude</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student—Positive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Student—Negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Coasting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Emotions (Red)</strong></td>
<td>• Feelings Students</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feelings Instructors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Emotional Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Environment (Orange)</strong></td>
<td>• Welcoming</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Supportive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Atmosphere/Ambiance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Physical Surroundings</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Safe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interaction</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Distractions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Hindrances (Dark Red)</strong></td>
<td>• Lack of Support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fear of Making a Mistake</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Disabilities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No Vision Of Future</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack Self-awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learned Helplessness/Dependence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Negative Labelling/Putdowns</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Attitude—Poor</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work—Too Hard/Too Easy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dislikes (Instructors/Subjects)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Medical</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Communication Difficulties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Self-Destructive Behaviour/Giving Up on Self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Rejection (Feelings Of)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Overindulgence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fixated in Time/Behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Participation—Lack Of</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Tired/Bored</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interests (Light Yellow)</strong></td>
<td>• CVP Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Work Placement</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Fun/Humour in Classes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Feedback</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relevant/Challenging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Courses--Computers/Recreation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vocation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Variety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning (Purple)</strong></td>
<td>• Experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Meaning For Instructors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Internal/External</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Maturity (Dark Green)</strong></td>
<td>• Independence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dependence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Positive Change</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Honouring Their Work/Worth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Dishonouring Their Work/Worth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Motivation (Aqua)          | • Definition  
• Demonstrated  
• Internal Motivators  
• External motivators  
• Relationships | • Negative/Positive  
• Intensity  
• Instructors/Parents/Peers  
• Disabilities  
• Feedback  
• Program/Activities |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| Relationships (Light Blue)| • Counselling  
• Peers  
• Parents  
• Instructor  
• Work Supervisor  
• Lack of relationships | • Wanting To Please  
• Personal Interactions  
• Negative influence |
| Self-Awareness (Dark Yellow) | • Knowing/Unaware Limitations/Disabilities  
• Aware/Unaware of Needs  
• Abilities/Opportunities | • Realistic/Not realistic |
| Self-Image (Dark Blue)   | • Abilities—Positive/Negative | • Failure/Fear  
• Realistic/Unrealistic  
• Vocation—Related To |
| Successful (Light Green) | • Achievement Successful  
• Achievement Difficult  
• Instructor Definition Of Success | • Influences  
• Failure  
• Rewards  
• Encouragement |
| Support (Dark Pink)      | • Parents  
• Instructors  
• Peers  
• Environment  
• Counselling/Emotional  
• Encouragement | • Technique (i.e. Humour)  
• Teaching materials  
• Relevance of instruction  
• Technology  
• Instructor Concordance  
• Opportunity For Success  
• Time-enough  
• Differences  
• Flexible  
• Feedback  
• Energy Levels—Students/Instructors |
Appendix H
Sample Drawings by Rhonda