

MINIMIZING DETERRENTS TO RE-TRAINING OR RE-EDUCATING LAID-OFF AND UNEMPLOYED ADULTS: AN INTERVENTION STUDY.

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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

An adult's decision to return to an organized educational activity is a complex, multifaceted process. Theory and research in this area has focused on the development of parsimonious conceptions of factors that impel adults to participate in educational opportunities (e.g., Boshier & Collins, 1985; Cross, 1981). This research is important to the development of our understanding of participation but it is limited by its inattention to factors that are negatively related to motivation to participate. Recently researchers have focused much more directly on enhancing our understanding of deterrents to participation and the role they play in intruding on participation decisions (e.g., Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985; Martindale & Drake, 1989; Scanlan & Darkenwald, 1984). Research on deterrents, though relatively immature as a field of inquiry, promises to add significantly to theories relating to adult participation in organized educational activities.

Much of the research in this area has focused on the identification of specific deterrents which affect adult re-entry decisions and the extent to which these

generalize over various populations (Blais, Duquette & Painchaud, 1989; Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985; Martindale & Drake, 1989; Scanlan & Darkenwald, 1984). While implications for practice of these studies are discussed, very little attention has been directed toward the empirical evaluation of interventions designed to overcome these deterrents. This is particularly the case for unemployed and laid-off adults.

The present study seeks to add to our knowledge about forces that negatively affect adult participation in systematic educational opportunities by evaluating an intervention designed to ameliorate such deterrents. By evaluating practical intervention methods grounded in knowledge from available deterrent research, we stand to learn much about how adults confront and deal with re-entry decisions which may have previously seemed to have been beyond their control. Such data will be instrumental in developing practical applications for helping adults overcome unresolved perceptions of deterrents that potentially prevent them from re-entering educational activities.

THEORY AND RESEARCH

Theories of Adult Participation in Education

Since the early 1960's, researchers have been analyzing participation rates in adult education. Many researchers (e.g., Boshier & Collins, 1985; Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985; Grabowski, 1976; Houle, 1961; Scanlan & Darkenwald, 1984) have conducted studies designed to illuminate basic perceptions and causes of participation in adult education. These perceptions stimulated researchers such as Blais et al. (1989) and Drake and Martindale (1989) to systematically assess the forces that affect participation.

Houle (1961) suggested that adult education participants were either goal (learn to accomplish specific objectives), activity (learn to develop social contacts and relationships with others) or learning (seek knowledge for its own sake) oriented. This tripartite typology represented the basis for which future researchers (e.g., Boshier, 1971) identified motives that impel people to participate in adult education. In the years to follow, various instruments were designed to investigate the validity and comprehensiveness of Houle's typology. Most notable was the Education Participation

Scale (EPS) which Boshier (1977) used in an evaluation of Houle's typology.

Twenty-two years after Houle first introduced his tripartite typology, Boshier and Collins (1985) conducted a large-scale empirical test to determine if it accurately characterized adult education participants. Using cluster analysis from a 40 item version of the EPS, a three-cluster solution was observed. Cluster I consisted of Cognitive Interest items and was congruent with learning orientation. Cluster II included "common interest" and "education centers" items loosely resembling the activity orientation and Cluster III included "to seek professional advancement" and to "acquire knowledge to help with other courses" which most resembled the goal orientation. The authors concluded that although the typology had described adult education participants, Houle failed to anticipate the complexity of learner's reasons for participation which became most evident in the activity orientation cluster (Boshier & Collins, 1985).

Descriptive survey methodology has frequently been used to identify factors underlying low participation rates among adult populations. This empirical research has contributed somewhat to the development of conceptual

models and theories which address adult participation behavior. Notably, three theoretical perspectives have attempted to combine dispositional, situational and institutional factors into composite models of participation. Dispositional factors are attitudes about learning and perceptions of oneself as a learner, such as feeling too old to learn, lack of confidence, and boredom. Situational factors refers to deterrents arising from one's situation in life at a given time, such as lack of time due to home or job responsibilities and lack of child care. Finally, institutional factors include those erected by institutions that exclude or discourage certain groups of learners because of such things as inconvenient schedules and lack of sufficient support services.

Scanlan (1986) conducted a comprehensive review of the literature on deterrents to participation and identified and discussed three significant developments for theoretical models for participation. First, Rubenson's (1977) Recruitment Paradigm emphasizes the perceptual components of a potential learner, whereas, actual experiences, needs and environmental factors are viewed as being less important in determining participation behavior than how the adult perceives and

interprets his/her barriers to participation. The model looks at participation behaviour as multiple interactions on both personal and environmental variables which affect an adult's life. However, these variables alone cannot explain participation behaviour but can only be interpreted by the adults themselves who then decide how to respond to their meanings. As a result, intermediate variables emerge: active preparedness; the perception and interpretation of the environment; and the experience of individual need(s) (Scanlan, 1986). These variables interact to determine both an individual's perception of an educational activity (valence) and the probability of participating and benefiting from a learning activity (expectancy). The combination of these variables play an important role in determining the perceived importance an adult has regarding educational activities and the probability of them participating (Scanlan, 1986). Taking a cognitivist perspective, this model suggests that deterrents to participation should be conceptualized as perceived frequencies or magnitude of influence rather than the assumption of actual experiences, actual environmental structures and actual individual needs.

Second, Cross' (1981) Chain-of-Response Model deals with a complex chain of responses (i.e., self-concept and

attitude toward education) that are intrinsic to the adult and play a critical role in a potential learner's decision making process. An adults decision to participate in an educational activity does not involve only one factor, but many factors as a result of a complex chain of responses that determine the individual's position in their environment and their ability to return to an educational activity (Scanlan, 1986). Adding prior elements of theory within this model, Cross has maintained the cognitivist approach in that participation behaviour is best interpreted by the individuals making the decisions.

Finally, the Psychosocial Interaction Model (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982) depicts participant responses to internal and external stimuli as the probability of an adult participating in systematic educational opportunities being affected by such variables as socioeconomic status, perceived value of participation, readiness to participate and barriers to participation. This model has combined prior formulations to enable rigorous testing and the development of participation behaviour. As in Cross' model of participation, participation is determined by a set of responses to internal and external stimuli, but

has extended this theoretical base by emphasizing socioeconomic status as a determinate for participation behaviour. Environments which encourage continuing education will elicit positive perceptions rather than negative ones which ultimately increases an adult's chances to participate in adult education. As well, Darkenwald and Merriam (1982) added informational factors to the overall deterrent framework which refer to not only the institute's negligence (institutional factors) in communicating program information, but an adult's failure to acquire information regarding available programs.

While these composite models of participation and supportive research studies have helped to extend our understanding of motivation to participate and have added to theory in that respect, others have looked to identify commonalties in deterrents that diminish motivation among different adult populations (e.g., Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985; Martindale & Drake, 1989). These studies serve as significant contributions to deterrent research as they have identified specific typologies of potential learners and developed conceptual frameworks as to what motivates an adult to participate in systematic educational activities. As well, these models imply that

a number of variables are associated with the decision to participate in educational activities and help to determine the influence of such demographic variables as age, sex, income, race, educational attainment, employment status and geographic location and nondemographic variables such as dispositional, situational and institutional factors.

Describing and Measuring Deterrents to Participation

Scanlan and Darkenwald (1984) were among the first to systematically investigate deterrents to participation. They used exploratory factor analysis to develop the Deterrents to Participation Scale (DPS) an instrument they validated for health professionals. A number of deterrents to participation in discipline-specific educational courses were found to be significant. These were: disengagement, stemming primarily from individual inertia, apathy and negative attitudes; dissatisfaction with the quality of available educational opportunities; costs to individuals; family constraints such as young children, working spouse and so forth; perceived lack of benefit and doubts about the need for continuing education; and constraints at work such as overload, stress, variable schedules and the like.

Further studies were carried out and a generic version of the DPS, one that was said to be generalizable to a wider population, was constructed. Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) enhanced the generalizability of the original DPS by validating it in the general adult population in the U.S. An exploratory factor analysis revealed a similar set of factors to the 1984 study. These were labeled as follows: lack of confidence; lack of course relevance; time constraints; low personal priority; cost; and personal problems. Other studies using the DPS have replicated these findings in U.S. Air Force enlisted personnel (Martindale & Drake, 1989) and female nurses (Blais et al., 1989). These studies identified similar deterrent forces.

While this collection of studies has helped to clarify the nature of psychosocial deterrents to participation, they reveal nothing about the extent to which different types of would-be learners experience these forces. This gap in our knowledge was addressed by Darkenwald and Valentine (1990) who conducted a study designed to generate profiles of potential types of learners in terms of both deterrent and sociodemographic variables. They found a variety of types of potential learners are influenced by different deterrents. Through

cluster analysis a typology of adults based on self-reported deterrents to participation was established. Type One refers to people deterred by personal problems and consists primarily of traditional homemakers with demanding life situations that make participation in organized adult education difficult. Type Two people are said to be deterred by lack of confidence and consists largely of mature adults who other than having problems with confidence are in a position to attend. Type Three refers to people deterred by educational costs and is made up mostly of young women of moderate education and moderate means who have the confidence to participate in adult education but cannot afford the direct and indirect costs involved. Type Four describes people who are not interested in organized education and consists mainly of well-educated, affluent, working individuals (more likely to be male than female) who place relatively low value on participation in organized adult education. Finally, people categorized as Type Five, are not interested in available courses and consists primarily of highly educated, middle-income, working individuals (more likely to be male than female) who place considerable value on continued education but find existing programming irrelevant to their needs.

These data are important because they reveal that deterrents to participation are likely to be differentially experienced by groups varyingly influenced by dispositional and situational factors. Adult populations differ substantially in, for example, age, race, gender, social economic status, employment status and prior education and such differences have implications for gauging the potency of specific deterrents. In the case of unemployed and laid-off adults, job loss may have resulted due to poor economic conditions, technological change, or other factors that are not connected with the laid-off persons motivation or ability to work (Amundson & Borgen, 1987). The multiple factors deterring adult participation and their varying impact mean that a number of different approaches are needed to encourage adult involvement in educational activities. Taking into account past research, understanding demographic and nondemographic variables for the unemployed and laid-off adult will help to identify and ameliorate the perceived deterrents to participation in an attempt to re-enter the workforce.

Although deterrents, to some extent, are population specific, Darkenwald and Valentine (1990) have identified "time constraints" as a universal deterrent to

participation and suggest that education can become more accessible for adult learners through scheduling flexible educational activities, distance learning, and provisions for self-pacing (1990). But the identification of situational deterrents such as time constraints, suggest little about alleviating the powerful deterring influences of dispositional and institutional factors.

Given that the factors identified by Darkenwald and associates have received substantial theoretical and empirical support they will serve as a guide to the present investigation. The present study will extend our prior knowledge by moving beyond the focus on identifying deterrents and assessing their generalizability. It introduces an intervention component which will enhance our understanding of the tractability of deterrent factors and the promise of strategies designed to assist adults in overcoming obstacles interfering with their likelihood of participation in systematic educational opportunities.

Intervention Studies

Intervention studies designed to ameliorate the negative influences of deterrents to participation have been few in number, of limited quality and specific to distinct segments of the population. An early example

was a model re-entry program for disadvantaged women (Prichard, 1982). The purpose of the program was to aid disadvantaged women who were interested in gaining employment in nontraditional career fields. Two workshops were offered focusing on nontraditional work for women. The workshops included guest speakers and role models, field trips and the compilation of career resource material (Prichard, 1982). A severe limitation of this project was the lack of mental preparation by the participants concerning their exposure to career related information. Also, as with most other intervention projects in this domain, the effectiveness of the workshop was not evaluated in a systematic way.

In a second example a U.S. project called "Career Assessment, Remediation, Education, Employment, and Re-entry (CAREER)" was mounted and reported (Pierre, 1989). The project served Hispanic persons who were economically disadvantaged, displaced, unemployed, or underemployed, as well as Hispanic females who were seeking nontraditional occupations. Of the 144 people participating, 64% successfully completed the training. The objective of the project was to deliver a series of intensive, short-term job training programs using competency-based instruction. Again, no outcome measures

were available to determine the effectiveness of the workshops. These studies leave many unanswered questions not the least of which is what are the short- and long-term impacts of the workshops on participants' decisions to re-enter into other training or educational programs? Did the workshops mentally prepare individuals for future programs? Were specific deterrents identified and strategies designed to overcome them? Did the interventions ultimately lead to improved participation in educational opportunities? Are the interventions generalizable to other populations?

An evaluation of an American college re-entry workshop (Hatala, 1993) concluded that structured, deterrent-oriented interventions have great potential as a practical approach for developing strategies to overcome deterrents to participation in adult education. The workshop enabled adults contemplating returning to school the opportunity to identify and deal with the deterrent forces that keep them from participating in education, and provided them with support for their re-entry decision process. The deterrents identified in the workshop were in keeping with those identified in the research literature. Re-entry workshops designed to address the deterrents can provide participants with

valuable information (e.g., financial aid, support services, and exposure to adults with similar circumstances) that could be useful in confronting and overcoming obstacles to re-entry into the educational setting. Participants surveyed, revealed that the re-entry workshop aided them in confronting their inhibitions regarding their return to school by providing them with the opportunity to share their concerns with a group of adults in similiar circumstances and school officials who were in a position to answer specific educational questions (Hatala, 1993). Seventy percent of the respondents returned to school after they attended the re-entry workshop. Although the evaluation design was relatively weak, it was concluded that the re-entry workshop can be used as a means for reducing and even eliminating deterrent forces, thereby increasing the potential rate of adult participation in organized educational opportunities.

An important feature of re-entry workshops of this sort is that they provide a nonthreatning forum for adults to deal with perceptions related to re-entry, which then enables administrators and program planners to identify deterrents adults face. This knowledge can then be used to improve the curriculum and support services

which facilitate the planning process and ultimately, contribute to increased enrollment, more regular attendance patterns and deeper levels of engagement and participation. At the same time, such interventions could serve as a means for aiding the transition of adults returning to a training or educational program. While the Hatala (1993) data are promising more tightly controlled research is needed to substantiate these claims.

Summary

Although empirical research on deterrents to participation has increased in recent years, it is deficient in at least five respects. First, most studies are limited to surveys of large samples of adult populations. While such studies have helped to identify deterrent factors and to validate in different populations methods for measuring and detecting them (e.g., the DPS scale) they do not further our understanding of how to ameliorate these deterrents. Second, most of the research has been quantitative self-report using instruments such as the DPS-G and findings have not been cross-validated with qualitative research data. Third, while different groups of learners have different deterrent profiles and deterrents experienced

by learners may be differentiated in terms of their dispositional and situational profiles (Darkenwald & Valentine, 1990), deterrent scales have not been used to determine adult changes in perceptions regarding deterrents to participation in adult education. Fourth, almost no empirical work has targeted interventions designed to ameliorate deterrents to participation as obstacles to further education. Finally, almost no studies have examined the impact of deterrents to participation in education as an obstacle specifically confronting unemployed and laid-off workers to successfully re-enter the work force. Any related work that has been reported has been highly descriptive and less than empirically rigorous in generating conclusions about intervention efficacy.

The present study is an attempt to overcome the deficiencies of prior research through the implementation of an intervention "re-entry workshop" designed to pave the way for unemployed and laid-off adults to enter re-training or re-education opportunities. The population for this study has a high need for such an intervention and is demographically highly varied. Rapid changes in technology and in business economics mean that these would-be workers must upgrade their existing skills and

acquire new ones throughout their working lives. As individuals seek career related information they must be ready to receive it or they will be incapable of retaining relevant information (Robbins & Tucker, 1986). The present study employs a sufficiently sophisticated design as to rule out competing, non-intervention effects on perceived deterrents to participation. The specific research questions are:

1. Can perceived psychosocial deterrents to participation in adult education for unemployed and laid-off adults be ameliorated through a re-entry workshop intervention?
2. If so, what specific deterrents are most likely to be diminished?
3. Are observed changes in perception stable over time?

METHOD

Sample

For the purpose of this study, a local employment agency in a moderately large urban centre in eastern Ontario, Canada, was recruited and 30 volunteers were randomly selected from the client groups. The agency provided lists of adults who were unemployed or laid-off at the time of the study. Candidates who were randomly selected from the lists were invited to participate on a voluntary basis. Once the adult had agreed to participate in the study, he or she was randomly assigned to early and delayed treatment groups. On average respondents were 40-49 years of age. They were 40% female and generally married with children living at home. Most respondents had completed high school without having achieved a higher educational credential. The groups were highly representative of those who normally solicit the help of the employment agency. According to data provided by the agency the average age of people soliciting help was 49, males 66%, female 34% and the average highest educational credential was completion of high school.

Instrument

The principal measurement device was a version of the DPS-G (Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985) (see appendix 1). The instrument was used due to its documented psychometric properties and generic form which could be easily adapted to the unemployed and laid-off adult population. Deterrent items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from "not important" to "very important".

In addition to the DPS-G items, sociodemographic information (e.g., gender, age category, marital status) was collected in order to enable comparisons with findings from prior research.

Design and Analysis

A delayed-treatment comparative group design was used in this study. This enabled the delayed treatment group to serve as a control group while at the same time not denying any participants treatment.

Early and delayed treatments were identical. The DPS was administered to each group at three intervals (baseline, interim and posttest). The posttest data collection interval was followed by telephone interviews with a random sample of participants in each group. The purpose of the follow-up interviews was to further

investigate attitudes toward deterrents and determine if individuals had re-entered or planned re-entry into a training or educational program. A short interview guide was developed (see appendix 2) and used to solicit further information from participants regarding the effectiveness of the re-entry workshop. The interview guide consisted of questions relating to the usefulness of the workshop and whether or not it helped to identify and diminish perceived deterrents to education.

The design was a 2 X 3 group by occasion multivariate analysis of variance with repeated measures. SPSSpc was employed to analyze the data. The between group factor was treatment group (early, late) and the within group factor was observation interval (baseline, interim, posttest). Six dependent variables for the analysis corresponded to the subscales of the DPS-G: lack of confidence, low course relevance, time constraints, low personal priority, cost and personal problems. Subscale scores were calculated by computing linear combinations (averages) of the items shown to load on respective factors in prior studies (Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985).

Treatment

The re-entry intervention was a one and a half day workshop (see appendix 3) administered to the early treatment group first. All workshops were given by the investigator at no cost to the participants or the supporting agency. As the workshop began, participants were required to fill out the DPS-G prior to introductions of participants, facilitators, and current and former adult students. The delayed treatment group filled out the DPS-G but did not receive the re-entry workshop until one month later.

A paper/pencil assessment was distributed, including a 'Goal Achievement Form' and 'Student Needs Assessment'. This assessment was used by both the participant and the workshop director to gain a better understanding of individual needs. Each workshop group was divided into smaller groups which discussed their feelings in an attempt to reduce the stress associated with meeting new people. Participants were then asked to brainstorm about personal obstacles and barriers associated with returning to a training or educational program. Deterrents to participation in education were reviewed and a discussion of "dealing with these identified deterrents" took place.

Panel presentations by former and present adult students were made. These individuals shared their experiences of returning to school, followed by a question and answer period. Finally, information regarding returning to a program was presented to the participants (financial aid, different types of retraining, benefits, etc.). A discussion of the misconceptions "of what it takes to return to a program" and personal action plans were developed and remaining concerns of the participants were addressed (e.g., "What are the chances of finding employment once the program is completed?" "What perquisites are required before I take the course?" "What is the difference between a private institute and a public one?").

RESULTS

Intervention Effects

Means and standard deviations for the six factors by each group and occasion appear in Table 1.

"SEE Table 1 Page 54"

The mean scores for all subscales are seen to decrease for each interval. This suggests, in general, that perceptions about the importance of deterrents to participation in education diminished as a consequence of the intervention method. This pattern was noted for each of the six subscales.

Table 2 shows intercorrelations among the deterrent subscale scores and reliability coefficients for each subscale by occasion. As expected, intercorrelations within subscales across occasions were high. In general, the majority of the remaining coefficients are greater than 0.3 in absolute value and statistically significant which is substantial for a sample of this size. These moderately high correlation's support the conjecture that the subscales related to an underlying deterrent construct and justify the use of multivariate analysis of variance. One exception, however, was the cost subscale which was found to be negatively related to perceived course relevance, time constraints and low personal priorities. This may be due to the fact that once the participants became aware of programs which provided funding and financial assistance, the perception of cost being a deterrent became less relevant. Although this is mere speculation, the author is unaware of any prior

studies that compare the relationship between deterrent factors.

"SEE TABLE 2 PAGE 55"

Overall scale reliability (Cronbach's alpha) for the six factors in the Darkenwald and Valentine study (1985) were .87 (lack of confidence), .83 (lack of course relevance), .72 (time constraints), .64 (low personal problems), .75 (cost), and .40 (personal problems) respectively. Table 2 reveals that the reliability (alpha) for the six subscales in the present study are quite consistent with the 1985 findings.

"SEE TABLE 3 PAGE 56"

As shown in Table 3 an unexpected multivariate main effect for group was obtained. The early treatment group scored higher for both of the course relevance $F(1, 25)=4.11, p<.05$ and cost $F(1, 25)=4.32, p<.05$ subscales, but no differences were observed for the lack of confidence, time constraints, low personal priority and personal problem factor sets. The means for early versus delayed treatment groups for course relevance and cost were $M=2.73$ vs. 2.44 and $M=3.21$ vs. 2.81 , respectively. Given the random allocation of participants to groups and identical treatment there was no reason to expect any group differences

Table 3 also reveals a statistically significant multivariate main effect for occasion. Univariate tests revealed that differences for occasion were observed for each of the six subscales: lack of confidence, $F(2, 50)=44.94, p<.001$, course relevance, $F(2, 50)=21.41, p<.001$, time constraints, $F(2, 50)=50.32, p<.001$, low personal priority, $F(2, 50)=24.06, p<.001$, cost $F(2, 50)=22.13, p<.001$, and personal problems, $F(2, 50)=22.13,$

$p < .001$. Inspection of means in Table 1 reveals a general tendency for the perceived importance of deterrents to decrease from baseline to posttest intervals which provides support for the hypothesis that the intervention affected perceived deterrents as predicted.

Table 3 also shows a statistically significant multivariate interaction effect for group by occasion. The univariate tests of this interaction divulged significant orthonormalized contrast effects comparing baseline to interim scores for each of lack of confidence, $F(1, 25) = 12.18$, $p < .01$, course relevance, $F(1, 25) = 5.84$, $p < .05$, time constraints, $F(1, 25) = 15.50$, $p < .001$, low personal priority, $F(1, 25) = 4.40$, $p < .05$ and cost $F(1, 25) = 4.03$, $p < .05$ subscales. Close inspection of the means in Table 1 reveals that in every case initial baseline perceptions of the early group were found to diminish at the interim level whereas no change was observed for the delayed group. Although not statistically significant, this pattern was also observed for the personal problem subscale. This findings provide overwhelming support for the hypothesis that the re-entry treatment was effective in diminishing perceived deterrents to participation. A statistically significant contrast between combined baseline and interim and

posttest intervals was also observed for the time constraint subscale, $F(1, 25)=6.94, p<.01$. Inspection of the means in Table 1 also reveals that in every case the importance of deterrents diminished from interim to posttest interval, although for some reason this drop was greater for the early group on the time constraints dimension.

Stability

Taken as a whole these findings suggest, first, that the treatment was successful for the delayed group, and second, that the previously diminished perceived deterrents from the early group not only did not disappear but they diminished further. This observation provides strong support for the hypothesis that treatment effects are stable over time, at least in the short run.

Informal Observation Data

A major observation of the present study was additional deterrents identified during the intervention treatment that were not accounted for on the DPS-G. The DPS-G developed in the Darkenwald and Valentine (1985) study was established to identify forces that deterred adults from participating in adult education courses and consisted of a heterogeneous population. The population

consisted of both employed and unemployed individuals (61% were employed full-time, 16% part-time, and 23% were unemployed) with diverse socioeconomic backgrounds. Although many of the deterrents identified in the 1985 study were consistent with participants in the present study, sociodemographic characteristics differ in that the present study involved a homogeneous sample population (unemployed and laid-off adults only). Taking this into consideration, there are important and identifiable variables in the present study that go beyond the prior deterrent construct. When dealing with the unemployed/laid-off population, many variables must be considered. These considerations were observed by Borgen and Amundson, (1984) as they described the stages of unemployment. The first stage is transitional in that an individual must accept their job loss or remain immobilized. Once an individual accepts job loss and realizes they need to acquire a new one, re-employment begins. If an individual is unsuccessful at this stage, a downward spiral becomes evident as the individual tries to cope with rejection and the stress associated with job search. When the individual has exhausted their ability to find employment, they start to feel worthless, isolated and drifting, at this time they may seek out

guidance. Support, training or educational opportunities are introduced and the individual starts to feel hopeful, understood and encouraged and works towards re-employment. If retraining or reeducation becomes the main focus for job re-entry, it is at this point in time that the individual must deal with any deterrents associated with returning to an educational program.

The deterrent construct identified in the 1985 study encompassed deterrents that affected participation, and due to the heterogeneous sample population did not specifically account for additional variables associated with being unemployed or laid-off. Two distinct differences for the present study became apparent for both the early and delayed groups. First, those individuals identified as being out of work for a shorter period of time, it was found that these adults were at the stage of evaluating their present situation and basing their future actions on previous experiences (employer contacts, prior job search practices, updated resume, etc.). The morale of these individuals appeared to be positive and upbeat. Their immediate need was to develop a plan of action for their job search. Retraining or reeducation had represented an option but was not as important as finding immediate employment.

Individuals who had been unemployed for a longer period of time appeared to be less positive and were searching out different means for re-entering the workforce. Retraining and reeducation become an even more important option due to their deterioration of working skills as a result of being unemployed for a long period of time.

Second, Amundson and Borgen (1987) associated stress with being unemployed and suggested it goes far beyond the job search process. An unemployed individual starts to experience financial pressures, additional problems with family members, and the loss of self-confidence and esteem (Amundson & Borgen, 1987). Although these variables are similar to the 1985 deterrent construct, they further add to an unemployed and laid-off adult deterrent profile. Due to the strong emotions associated with losing a job, decisions relating to educational re-entry may not be considered. Once the emotion associated with losing a job has been dealt with, updating skills become important and the individual is better prepared to overcome their reluctance to participate in an educational activity and start to match training programs to viable careers.

Prior negative educational experiences were a major reason for not returning to a program which became

evident during group discussion. Both the early and delayed groups discussed deterrents that were related to personal obstacles and barriers associated with prior educational experiences. These deterrent forces were experienced while the adult was enrolled in a program, something that could be associated with 'because I was not confident of my learning ability', 'because I felt unprepared for the course', 'because I didn't think I could attend regularly' and 'because I don't enjoy studying' items of the DPS-G (1985). Specific prior negative educational experiences identified during the re-entry workshop were as follows: loss of motivation; no prerequisite (did not take any upgrading courses and was unprepared); poor time management skills; became bored easily during class due to lack of interest; course did not meet specific expectations; daycare problems incurred during course; course was too advanced and could not keep up; too much homework; too many tests/essays; competition among students for marks; too much group work; and transportation problems. These observational data suggest that it may be important to expand the deterrent profile, at least for this population. Intervention research may want to be measured as further additions to the deterrent construct.

Interview Follow-up

A random sample of ten participants (five from each group) were selected for follow-up telephone calls two months after the final re-entry workshop. All participants contacted had returned to a training or educational activity ranging from computer courses to career related workshops. A reoccurring theme throughout the interviews was how the re-entry workshop provided information regarding available training and educational opportunities. The participants realized that the longer they were out of work the more important it was to maintain and update their skills in order to find employment. Most participants saw the re-entry workshop as "an opportunity to meet other adults with similiar circumstances" and "an opportunity to get things out in the open". One participant expressed training or educational opportunities as the same as purchasing a computer, "Before you spend money on a computer, you better make sure that it will do everything you want it to do. When looking for employment it is important to match education to a viable career otherwise your just wasting your time".

With regards to diminishing perceived deterrents to educational re-entry, one participant stated "the

workshop helped me to build my confidence regarding returning to school and now I don't have to be ashamed about going back". Another individual stated "I now realize the importance of updating my skills so I can remain competitive with the younger people coming out of school". Although some of the interviewed individuals had made the decision to re-enter a training or education program prior to attending the workshop, the re-entry workshop helped them to prepare themselves mentally for re-entry and to choose a program that would best suit their needs (private institutions versus university or college courses).

The cost of entering a program remained the greatest deterrent to participating. Although the re-entry workshop provided alternative means for financing an education, individuals were still concerned with finding the money to pay for tuition. One individual returned to a program because it was sponsored by unemployment insurance, otherwise he was not in a financial position to pay for a course. Also, the importance of family support was not considered prior to the re-entry workshop. Individuals were better informed to discuss their reasons for entering a program with their families. Open communication with family members

allowed both sides to understand the commitment that is need to return to school and their participation in a program represented a greater chance of re-entering the workforce.

DISCUSSION

Intervention Effects

The primary focus of the present research was to determine whether an intervention treatment on a sample population of unemployed and laid-off adults would be successful in diminishing perceived deterrents to participation in adult education. Prior to this study, deterrent research centered mainly on identifying what deters adults from participating in educational programs and developing a theoretical basis for nonparticipation. Although this research (Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985; Martindale & Drake, 1989; Scanlan & Darkenwald, 1984) has added significantly to our knowledge base, very little systematic inquiry has been carried out to determine the tractability of perceived deterrents to planned interventions.

Utilization of the DPS-G in the present study enables comparisons with Darkenwald and Valentine (1985). Such comparison reveals that the six-factor deterrent framework is appropriate to the unemployed/laid-off

population. Overall scale reliabilities (alphas) for the six factors compared well with those previously reported.

In the present study, the DPS-G was used for the first time to measure change in an adult's perception of what deters them from participation. The results confirm that perceptions about deterrents to participation can be altered by planned interventions. The re-entry workshop proved to be an effective way to diminish virtually each of the six deterrents measured. Table one presents mean scores of factor sets over the three intervals. The largest deterrent factors to decrease over time were cost (mean difference 1.19) and time constraints (mean difference 1.11). As observed in other studies (Blais et al., 1989; Darkenwald & Scanlan, 1984; Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985), cost and time constraints rated higher than any other. The information provided during the re-entry workshop covered financial assistance and introduced training programs which provide funding. Many of the participants were unaware of educational assistance and the cost of financing an education. Participants were unable to access information regarding programs due to their lack of resources and their inability to approach program officials with well-

informed career related questions regarding re-entry decisions.

A number of limitations of this study can serve as examples for future research possibilities. A larger sample population could be used to determine the effects of a re-entry workshop intervention across a broader range of participants. As well, a more comprehensive follow-up needs to be conducted to determine the stability of the ameliorated deterrents and observations of group differences at pretest may be considered to determine sociodemographic distinctions among participants.

The DPS-G was administered at three intervals to determine whether or not perceived deterrents were stable over time. Initial application of the DPS-G prior to the treatment intervention, was quite consistent to factors found in prior research (Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985). Of the six factors identified in this study, all corresponded statistically with the 1985 findings. Noticeable decreases in mean scores for each deterrent factor set became evident during the baseline and posttest intervals. The present study has substantial theoretical value, in that it reinforces the deterrent factor construct identified in prior research. A careful

examination of the intervention yields practical insight into the nature and interplay of deterrent forces and how institutions and adults can overcome them. Although the durability and generalizability of the intervention have been tested on a small sample, it goes a long way towards the identification and amelioration of deterrents to participation in education for specific adult populations.

When dealing with deterrents to participation, institutions must take into consideration that dispositional deterrents are not generalizable and must be examined individually in order to implement appropriate changes that facilitate increased enrollment. However, institutional and situational deterrents, such as cost and time constraints can be viewed as universal (Darkenwald & Valentine, 1990) and for obvious reasons are important considerations for organizing educational activity schedules. The need to develop methods for predicting the tractability of deterrent types and to test resulting hypotheses is important to understanding the differential impact of interventions on specific deterrents

Initial evidence of the six factors regarding stability of deterrent reduction over the three intervals

was quite substantial. All six factors were reduced in mean score from baseline to posttest. However it is necessary to perform longitudinal studies that track participants and their perceptions over longer periods of time. This will add to the understanding of identifying deterrents and developing interventions for ameliorating them. Lifelong learning has become increasingly important in a time of steady technological change. In order to compete in a fast changing labour market, individuals must constantly add and upgrade their skills. The importance of developing and researching interventions which ameliorate deterrents to participation has become necessary to maintain a high level of working skills in what has become a competitive job market.

The present study is limited by its relatively short time frame. It is necessary to perform longer term follow-up with participants of the re-entry workshops which would help to determine the stability of ameliorated deterrents, especially for those with deterring forces of higher degree. This would help to determine whether or not the participant has re-entered a training or educational program as a result of the intervention. We need to focus on long term impact much

more systematically and directly which is a problem with most intervention/training studies. The criteria for success are more or less intermediate while the real issue is one not of reducing deterrents but of enhancing participation. How can we better understand the impact of intervention on participation rates? This is a relatively expensive problem to answer but from a theoretical point of view, we need to have better evidence that in fact deterrent reduction does lead to increased participation.

The information provided at the re-entry workshops consisted of training or educational programs geared to re-entering the work force. The information must match the participant's present situation or the intervention is futile. If the participants were employed at the time of the intervention, information regarding training and educational opportunities would have been delivered differently. Once this distinction is made, the individual can take relevant information and use it to make well-informed decisions regarding re-entry. The need to know whether interventions for more generic populations can be effective may represent an important direction for intervention research.

Also, participants viewed time constraints as being heavily associated with looking for a job, taking care of children, or courses scheduled at an inconvenient time which did not permit them to enroll in a program. A discussion about time management principles was introduced, as well as information on programs in the area which provided daycare, convenient schedules and job search strategies. As a result, participants' perceptions of those factors deterring them from returning to a training or educational program had altered once the appropriate information was provided.

The sample used in this study may not even have included people with extremely high deterrent forces and serves as a further limitation. For instance, individuals who were invited to attend the re-entry workshop but did not may experience deterrent forces that keep them from seeking information. These individuals may be so immobilized that even if they attend re-entry workshops they would not be able to benefit without prior counselling. Further research is necessary to determine ways for reaching adults who are experiencing dispositional and situational deterrents at a much higher level.

A final limitation was the use of a self-directed format in a group setting. In this situation, the format may not have had the same effect as it would have had with individuals who would find individualized instruction more useful. Use of group format with individualized instruction and minimal group interaction is somewhat artificial. This may be reflected in the findings and is difficult to gauge as this was not part of the study. Individual re-entry counselling might be more suitable for adults who have been out of a group setting for a longer period of time (being in groups may represent deterring forces). Comparisons of group and individualized re-entry workshops could be performed to analyze the impact of both methods.

Implications For Research

Since this is the first study using a DPS-G and an intervention treatment, much more work is needed to establish the stability of the intervention over a longer period of time. The only way this can be done is by replication of the present research with different populations.

Implications For Practice

The ability for an organization to aid adults in overcoming their deterrents is a powerful tool. If

administrators and program planners are to deal with adult deterrents to education and programming issues, it is not enough to identify deterrents but to develop practical applications to overcome them. Re-entry workshops provide participants with valuable information (e.g., financial aid, support services, exposure to adults with similar circumstances) necessary to confront and overcome their deterrents and to re-enter an educational setting. Re-entry workshops are location and population specific and information provided must be suited to the needs of the participants. When implementing a re-entry workshop it is important that these considerations are at the forefront, otherwise the information will not match the needs of the participants and may cause more harm than good. Information regarding local training and educational opportunities must be up-to-date and in line with viable career possibilities. Deterrents identified in the re-entry workshop should be validated and discussed among participants for appropriate ways of overcoming them. Appropriate resources must be provided, as well as a list of referrals to training and educational programs.

As was suggested by Darkenwald and Valentine (1985), deterrent scales should be developed with distinctive

sup-populations in mind. The same principle holds true for the development and implementation of a re-entry workshop. The identification and implementation of the present intervention can be adapted for various populations. The format for the unemployed and laid-off intervention dealt with combining potential training programs with viable careers whereas the format for employed individuals could include programs that help maintain ones career. Utilizing prior deterrent framework represents a solid basis for program development and participant interaction for re-entry workshops. A majority of deterrents identified in the re-entry workshop were based on an individual's perception of education, thus it would be beneficial to develop the re-entry workshops on the principles of adult education that would maximize opportunities for participant interaction and discussion. As well any opportunity for making the sessions inherently meaningful to participants should be exploited.

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Appendix 1

Telephone Interview Schedule

Name: _____ Phone : _____

1. Your decision to attend the Re-entry Workshop was based on?
2. After attending the Re-entry Workshop, did you return to a training or educational program?
3. If yes, was your decision to return or not, influenced by your participation in the re-entry workshop?
4. Are you currently in a training or educational program?
5. Do you plan to continue your education?
6. Was the Re-entry Workshop helpful in resolving personal issues relating to your decision to return to a training or educational program? Did it help to increase:
 - Confidence
 - Course relevance
 - Time constraints
 - Low personal priority
 - Cost
 - Personal problems
7. Did the Re-entry Workshop clarify any preconceptions you may have had regarding the procedures and responsibilities necessary to return to a training or educational program?
8. What portion of the Re-entry Workshop was most effective?

9. In your own words, briefly indicate one or two major personal benefits you have gained as a result of participation in the Re-entry Workshop?

APPENDIX 2

Agenda for re-entry workshop

Day One

- 9:00-9:30 Introductions and filling out DPS-G.
- 9:30-10:30 Discussion on deterrents to education.
- 10:30-10:40 Break
- 10:40-11:30 Discussion of former educational and training experiences.
Filling out "Students Needs Assessment" and "Goal Achievement Form"
- 11:30-12:30 Discussion of the misconceptions of returning to a training or educational program.

Day Two

- 9:00-10:00 Review of previous day
- 10:00-11:00 What Programs are available in your area?
What specific programs are available and where are they?
What are your funding options?
- 11:00-11:10 Break
- 11:10-12:00 Discussion on ways to overcome deterrents to education.
- 12:00-12:45 Lunch
- 12:45-2:00 Discussion and preparation for personal action plans.
- 2:00-3:00 Completion of personal action plans and workshop closure.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistics for Deterrents by
Group and Occasion

Deterrent Factors SD	Group	Baseline		Occasion		
		Mean	SD	Interim Mean	Posttest SD	Posttest Mean
Lack of Confidence .60 .35	Early	2.60	.71	2.00	.62	1.60
	Delayed	2.06	.63	2.00	.70	1.54
Course Relevance .65 .63	Early	3.14	.87	2.64	.49	2.02
	Delayed	2.31	.96	2.24	1.03	1.66
Time Constraints .46 .71	Early	3.63	.68	3.03	.45	2.04
	Delayed	2.80	.85	2.82	.97	2.17
Low Priority .62 .63	Early	2.74	.94	2.19	.83	1.89
	Delayed	2.51	.79	2.50	.89	1.68
Cost .65	Early	3.10	1.30	2.33	.85	1.60
	Delayed	3.31	1.07 1.01	3.28	1.17	2.44
Personal Problems .55 .28	Early	2.04	.86	1.48	.61	1.41
	Delayed	1.56	.55	1.40	.52	1.34

Table 2
Intercorrelations among Deterrent Factors
(Cronbachs alpha on diagonal)

(1) = Baseline, (2) = Interim, (3) = Posttest

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1	Lack of Confidence(8)B	(.77)																	
2	Lack of Confidence(8)I	.78***	(.76)																
3	Lack of Confidence(8)P	.66***	.73***	(.65)															
4	Course Relevance(6) B	.22*	.21*	.23*	(.88)														
5	Course Relevance(6) I	.26**	.22*	.26**	.84***	(.80)													
5	Course Relevance(6) P	.53***	.29**	.48***	.41***	.49***	(.68)												
7	Time Constraints(5) B	.40**	.38***	.16*	.27**	.26**	.22*	(.72)											
3	Time Constraints(5) I	.31**	.47***	.28**	.39***	.33***	.20*	.74***	(.74)										
3	Time Constraints(5) P	.23*	.32***	.30**	.22*	.28**	.23*	.36***	.57***	(.44)									
10	Low Priority(5) B	.65***	.47***	.62***	.26**	.37***	.47***	.61***	.43***	-.46***	(.73)								
11	Low Priority(5) I	.49***	.64***	.62***	.31***	.37***	.47***	.39***	.42***	.60***	.67***	(.73)							
12	Low Priority(5) P	.70***	.71***	.60***	-.30***	.37***	.56**	.48***	.38***	.36***	.60***	.73***	(.54)						
13	Cost(3) B	.27**	.31***	.07*	-.13*	-.27**	-.08*	-.09*	.06*	-.14*	-.03*	-.02*	.23*	(.71)					
14	Cost(3) I	.14*	.27**	.25**	-.39***	-.26**	-.05*	-.33***	-.11*	.11*	-.03*	.06*	-.03*	.61***	(.70)				
15	Cost(3) P	-.28*	-0.2*	.04*	-.21*	-.23*	-.15*	-.38***	-.11*	.11*	-.32***	-.07*	-.29**	.44***	.70***	(.60)			
16	Personal Prob.(4) B	.47***	.23*	.33***	.42***	.32***	.48***	.20*	.23*	.02*	.35***	.32***	.40***	.20*	-.13*	-.22*	(.54)		
17	Personal Prob.(4) I	.46***	.62***	.43***	.26**	.33***	.07*	.51***	.44***	.26**	.54***	.50***	.42***	.09*	.06*	.02*	.42***	(.51)	
18	Personal Prob.(4) P	.49***	.45***	.34***	.28**	.36***	.13*	.34***	.23*	.17*	.48***	.27**	.28**	.15*	.13*	.05*	.30***	.02*	(.64)

p < .05. **p < .01. ***p < .001.

3 = baseline I = interim P = posttest

Number of Items in Parentheses

Table 3
Sources of Variation for 2 X 3 Multivariate Analysis of Variance
with Repeated Measures (N = 30)

Source	Univariate df ^a	Hotelling's Approx.F	Multivariate df	Probability
Group	1	3.61	6, 20	<.01
Error	25			
Occasion	2	15.55	12, 14	<.001
Occs X Grp	2	4.80	12, 14	<.01
Error	25			
Total	55			