

FOLLOW-UP STUDY OF STUDENTS ENROLLED
IN ADULT EVENING CLASSES
AT BOZEMAN VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL, 1968-1970
WITH IMPLICATIONS FOR CURRICULUM PLANNING

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A new type of education emerged shortly before the 1920's. It gained great impetus especially with the Vocational Education Act of 1963 and the Vocational Amendments of 1968, with the emphasis placed on the idea that education is life--not a mere preparation for an unknown kind of future.¹ Adult education fills this requisite. The adult educational program is not meant to be exclusively designed for adults, but deals with the maturity of all students. These programs have become widespread in all areas of the United States. Adults use such educational programs to their advantage for updating their skills for gaining new knowledge and for recreational use of their leisure time. Other purposes for adult education were listed by Axford as being self-understanding, citizenship education, remedial education, training and retraining, the preparation of senior citizens, and cultural enrichment.²

In order to understand the effectiveness of any educational program, evaluations must be made periodically, even though they be difficult to

¹Eduard C. Lindeman, The Meaning of Adult Education (Montreal: Harvest House, 1961) p. 3.

²Roger W. Axford, Adult Education: The Open Door (Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1969) pp. 4-5.

measure. The adult educational program is no exception. Educators need to know whether they are achieving their preplanned goals and objectives. They are continually in search of improved methods to determine whether the student has really learned the material that has been designed for him.

Kidd has said of the evaluation of adult learners:

It seems to be clear from all evidence that adults, even more than children, are interested in the application of what they learn. Adults seem to be more interested in the direction in which their learning is taking them. The motivation of adults, since they engage in most activities from free choice and not by law, is dependent upon their being convinced that progress is being made toward some goal. For all these objects evaluation is essential.³

Adult education courses can be greatly improved through evaluations. A program evaluation will determine (1) how successfully the objectives of the program are being accomplished, (2) how well the students are reacting, and (3) how the succeeding programs can be made even more productive than the existing ones.

This researcher is concerned primarily with an evaluation of the students previously enrolled in the office skills courses of adult education programs in order to implement improvements in future curriculum planning. The writer has found no evidence of previous studies relating to adult program evaluations incorporating the use of questionnaires being mailed to former students. The students themselves may be the best

³J. Roby Kidd, How Adult Learn (New York: The Association Press, 1959) p. 295, cited by Robert W. Axford, Adult Education: The Open Door (Scranton, Pennsylvania: International Textbook Company, 1969) p. 188.

source of information available to the faculty and the administration in making curriculum changes.

THE PROBLEM

To determine if the adult education program at the Bozeman Vocational-Technical School is meeting the needs of the enrollees and what changes, if any, need to be developed in the adult office skills courses, the writer has undertaken a three-year follow-up study of those students enrolled in adult typing, shorthand, and/or business machines during the years 1968-1970.

General Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this follow-up study of students previously enrolled in the office skills courses in adult education classes was threefold.

1. To determine the worthwhile values the students received by enrolling in adult typing, shorthand, and/or business machines.
2. To learn the number of those seeking secretarial positions who actually received employment.
3. To use the results of the questionnaires in planning a more meaningful adult program in the office skills area.

Limitations of the Study

This study was limited to all of the students who enrolled in a ten-week quarter of study in the courses of adult typing, shorthand and/or business machines at the Bozeman Vocational-Technical School. The program in adult typing has been in existence since 1954, but because

of the difficulty in locating former students, this study has been limited to those enrolled in typing, shorthand, and business machines during the years from 1968-1970.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

To assist the reader with the terminology of this paper, the following definitions are presented--adult education, office skills area, and vocational-technical school.

Adult Education

Adult education refers to the educating of those students who voluntarily wish to update or continue their education. The training may be for recreational or vocational use to the student. Adult programs are usually conducted on a part-time basis, such as evening classes, discussions, and institutes. In Montana, any person over the age of 16 may enroll and participate in an adult education class.

Office Skills Area

The office skills area or the office skills courses refer to those courses which require the ability to use finger dexterity with proficiency. In the office business area, this would include such courses as typing, shorthand, business machines, and filing. Developing skills requires the use of musculature control and coordination in addition to mental phases of understandings and attitudes.⁴

⁴Douglas Elanford Anderson, Teaching Business Subjects, 2nd edition, (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1965) p. 109.

Vocational-Technical School

A vocational-technical school refers to those schools whose primary goal is in educating post-secondary students. The students who enroll receive one year of instruction in specialized areas to satisfy their career needs. Vocational-technical schools accept state and federal Vocational-technical reimbursement for ongoing programs.

SOURCES OF DATA

The review of literature was restricted to the materials in the Montana State University Library. A study of the existing adult programs and a review of other follow-up studies undertaken in Montana was investigated.

The writer conferred with Woodrow Wold, Director of the Bozeman Vocational-Technical School. He feels that the average person in Bozeman wants to keep up with the change if their job changes. Adult education is one door open to them. He continued by saying that evaluation is a necessity of great importance in adult education. The use of what has been learned and the value the person who enrolled in the program has received are valuable to the educator. Changes in curriculum and scheduling can result from periodic evaluations.⁵

The review of the literature researched is presented in Chapter II.

⁵Statement by Woodrow Wold, Director of Bozeman Vocational-Technical School, personal interview, August 4, 1971.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A review of literature was examined in three general areas--those concerned with (1) the need and purposes of adult education, (2) related studies in adult education programs, and (3) follow-up studies conducted in Montana. However, the writer found that little research had been conducted in the area of follow-up studies in the adult education area. The follow-up studies in Montana pertaining to curriculum development were utilized in determining the procedures used in conducting follow-up studies.

LITERATURE PERTAINING TO

NEEDS AND PURPOSES IN ADULT EDUCATION

Lifelong learning has been with us since the days of ancient history, but the adult education movement is a product of our century. The legislation of the sixties especially marked a period of growth for adult learning. Because of the inevitability of change, the growth of the adult education movement is also inevitable. Future growth will continue even more rapidly. New skills need to be learned with the advent of automation. There will be no such thing as terminal education. The unemployed will be forced to acquire an education.

After World War II, America found itself unprepared for the surge of technology. Our trained manpower is still in short supply. The unemployment figures show the need for trained workers. In New York City alone, The Labor Department reports over 50,000 white collar and other jobs available, with very few qualified applicants. Jobs are available for the trained persons. Our schools in the United States are not teaching enough of these necessary skills for employment. Continuing educational programs do their part in this area. They fill the gap caused by the conventional school in meeting the requirements of the technological gap.

The learner's experience is the highest resource value in adult education. If education is life, then life is also education. It is the adult learner's living textbook. Adult educational programs do not use authoritative teaching, examinations before original thinking, or any kind of rigid formula. Students of the program are comprised of those adults who wish to keep their minds fresh, those who gain from experience, and those who are led in the discussion by teachers who are also searching for new knowledge. These persons want to improve themselves. Among other things, they want freedom, creativity, appreciation, enjoyment, and fellowship.⁶

Leisure time, created by use of automation, also creates another problem--a problem for the adult educator. Finding a constructive use of leisure time and using it in a cultural manner is a necessity. The

⁶Eduard C. Lindeman, The Meaning of Adult Education (Montreal: Harvest House, 1961) p. 6.

workweek is shorter, more vacations are being allowed, and retirement is seen at an earlier age. Courses such as dramatics, fine arts, aviation, foreign language, and dancing may be considered vocational or non-vocational. The athletically inclined may choose tennis, swimming, golf, and skiing. For maximum benefits in these areas, many are turning to a formalized education.

Another concern of the American people today is the high costs of those on welfare--a drain on the tax dollar. Job opportunities exist, but many of the able-bodied are unemployed because of illiteracy and the lack of necessary skills. These welfare costs can be reduced through adult educational programs while, at the same time, the economy can be strengthened.

Almost nine percent of our total population is considered a part of the aging group. To be a well adjusted and productive part of our society, these senior citizens need the special attention offered through the adult education programs.

Man has always been a creature of curiosity. He wishes to acquire new knowledge as it develops. If one wonders what keeps satellites in the air or why we are fighting in Vietnam, continuing education programs need to be available to him.

Margaret Mead says of adult education:

Continuing educations is the means in a free society whereby government may be improved, communities rebuilt, social ills like juvenile delinquency and racial discriminations healed, wise decisions made, and change directed--if not controlled.⁷

⁷William G. Carr, Focus (Washington, D.C. NAPSAC, 1963) p. 24.

To do this, though, we need the necessary financial support and knowledge about how the adult learns. Education must be used as a means of "how, not just what" should be done.

LITERATURE PERTAINING TO RELATED STUDIES IN ADULT EDUCATION

Martinez undertook an evaluation of the curriculum in adult education. The purpose of his study was to develop criteria for the evaluation in five areas of the adult education curriculum: the philosophy, character, planning, improvement, and evaluation of curriculum. Statements, in a questionnaire, were rated by 91 full-time adult education administrators and by 42 adult education teachers from California public school districts with evening high school and adult education programs of over 200 for the 1960-71 school year.

Recommendations that were made relevant to the present study are (1) during the formulations of the adult education curriculum, the directives of the State Department of Education should be followed; (2) the adult education curriculum should be evaluated at a regularly scheduled time interval; (3) the evaluation process should include and follow an instrument or a guide which has been accepted or adopted by the State Department of Education; and (4) the evaluation of the curriculum should include in the process all persons or groups who are responsible for and responsive to the program.⁸

⁸ Frank Robert Martinez, "Criteria for the Evaluation of the Curriculum in Adult Education," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of California, 1961) Dissertation Abstracts. (Vol. XXIV, June, 1961) p. 1062-A.

Kahn conducted a study of which the purpose was to appraise the practices of adult evening programs of community colleges in Washington State. The method of his study was to develop, from a survey of the literature, a list of practices recommended by writers in the field of adult education. This list was used as the basis for the development of an appraisal instrument. This questionnaire, which served as the criteria for the appraisal of practices, was sent to a representative population of the State Department adult education directors, community college adult education administrators, and college instructors of adult education courses. They were asked to indicate the importance of each statement by rating each practice on a five-point scale ranging from desirable to essential. Of the questionnaires mailed, 90 percent were returned.

The result of this study was a list of community college adult education administrative practices ranked in order of their importance, as well as a table of Washington State Community College adult program practices correlated with the practices of those who received questionnaires. Conclusions of the study indicate a wide range of practices supported by those college adult directors in the administration of the programs.⁹

An evaluation of the quality of reported research dealing with the evaluation of adult education was the purpose of Sutton's study. The objectives were to identify, critically analyze, and evaluate the reported research which had been conducted under the guidance of specified

⁹Louis Kahn, "An Appraisal of Practices of Adult Evening Programs of Community Colleges in Washington State," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Washington State University, 1966) Dissertation Abstracts (Vol. XXVII, June, 1967) p. 97-A.

institutions. An analysis and evaluation of 40 studies showed that the selected evaluation research falls into three categories: (1) descriptive studies of single programs; (2) comparative studies of two or more programs; and (3) comparative studies of the outcomes of the same programs of two or more populations. Evaluation studies which are mainly of local character should be appraised in terms of their operational values to the school making them and not in the sense of research.

Researchers in this field need to pay particular attention to the elements of good design, to sampling techniques, to instrument development, and to appropriate statistical treatments of their data. Evaluations should lead to a further extension and refinement of the researcher's theory.¹⁰

The hypothesis of Bertrand's study of the graduates of a selected parish school system in Louisiana were (1) an adult academic program has positive effects upon graduates of the program; (2) the impact of an adult academic education will vary according to the sex of the graduates; (3) the impact of adult academic programs will vary according to age; and (4) the impact of an adult academic educational program will vary with the number of years that have elapsed since completion of the program. A questionnaire was mailed to 586 graduates, and the first 30 who responded were visited. Results of the study showed an increased

¹⁰Elizabeth Walker Sutton, "Analysis of Research on Selected Aspects of Evaluation in Adult Education," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, Florida State University, 1966) Dissertation Abstracts, (Vol. XXVII, June, 1967) p. 926-A.

interest in schools, news items, and state and national affairs; a tendency to vote more often; and a tendency to join civic, social and church organizations. These graduates moved into more skilled jobs and had an average annual salary increase of \$1000. All four hypotheses stated were validated.¹¹

Jewell's study was to determine if the people of Lovell, Wyoming, were interested in further education. The findings were used to justify an adult education program in that particular community. The survey also determined the areas of interest and the numbers interested in each area. Of the 740 questionnaires sent, only 20 percent were returned. The recommendations of this study include (1) publicity should be stressed of the course offerings to maintain an interest in the adult education program; (2) the time the classes are offered should correlate with the growing season of the farming community of Lovell to keep attendance high; (3) second-level courses in particular areas of study should be offered; (4) a wide variety of classes should be offered; and (5) classes should be in session early enough in the season in order to be finished by the Christmas holidays.¹²

¹¹ John Avery Bertrand, "The Impact of Five Years of Adult Academic Education in a Selected School in Louisiana," (unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Texas, 1966) Dissertation Abstracts, Vol. XXVII, June, 1967, p. 2045-A.

¹² Calvin William Jewell, "A Study of Adult Education and its Implementation in a Rural Community," (unpublished professional paper, Montana State University, 1962) pp. 1-37.

LITERATURE PERTAINING TO
FOLLOW-UP STUDIES CONDUCTED IN MONTANA

McLean conducted a five-year follow-up study of the graduates of Plentywood High School for the purpose of curriculum evaluation. Questionnaires were mailed to former students of which 61 percent responded. Conclusions of the study indicated (1) an educational and vocational guidance program should be available to Plentywood High School students; (2) continuing studies should be made in developing the curriculum; and (3) a wide range of extra-curricular activities should be available to the students. McLean concluded that curriculums have a tendency to become outmoded and without direction unless continuous evaluations are being made.¹³

Deeney compared the course offerings of the business department at Richey High School with 19 selected Eastern Montana schools. Questionnaires sent to the students who attended Richey High School in 1958 and 1959 were used for the evaluation of the curriculum. Conclusions drawn from his study show that the business curriculum at Richey High School is not broad enough and should include more general education courses. Richey High School's business department compared favorably with those of other high schools of similar size in the same area. From replies of the former students, Deeney found that the business department had not met the needs of those in general business education. Therefore, more

¹³Clifton C. McLean, "Follow-up Study of the Graduates of Plentywood High School," (unpublished professional paper, Montana State University, 1962) pp. 1-37.

emphasis should be stressed in general business education when planning the curriculum.¹⁴

Johnson's study was concerned with the graduates of Hamilton High School, 1958-63. The opinions of 80 graduates, on 33 percent of the mailed questionnaires, was the basis for the evaluation of the school's curriculum. Johnson recommends that another evaluation follow the one conducted. He stresses the importance of evaluation for updating and upgrading the present course offerings.¹⁵

All research conducted by the writer reveals the importance of evaluation procedures in planning curriculums. The graduates of any program can offer the best suggestions for improvement, whether this be for high schools, adult programs, or colleges. The findings of the evaluations of the adult program at the Bozeman Vocational-Technical School's adult education program are presented in Chapter III.

¹⁴John B. Deeney, "Evaluation of the Business Curriculum by Graduates of Richey High School," (unpublished professional paper, Montana State University, 1961) pp. 1-35.

¹⁵Loren E. Johnson, "Follow-up Study of the Graduates of Hamilton High School," (unpublished professional paper, Montana State University, 1965) pp. 1-42.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

After talking with Mr. Woodrow Wold, director of the Bozeman Vocational Technical School and the adult education program, the writer found that no survey had ever been made in the adult educational program at Bozeman. The decision was made to determine the effectiveness of the adult office skills area and to determine how, if needed, a better curriculum could be devised.

Design of Study

Originally, the study was to include those who had enrolled during the years 1966 to 1970. Due to the large number of those who had moved and had left no forwarding addresses, the study was limited to those who had attended classes from 1968 to 1970.

The names of the students and their addresses were obtained from the office of the Bozeman Vocational-Technical School. The writer was informed through the postal department that forwarding addresses were kept on file for the last two years only. Consequently, those who were not listed in the telephone directory of two years ago were not mailed questionnaires.

After reading and comparing several follow-up studies previously conducted, a survey instrument was constructed. Several persons were

presented this questionnaire to fill out, and corrections were made upon their recommendations before the questionnaire was mailed to those selected for the survey.

The first questionnaire was mailed to the students on February 23, 1972. Of the 120 who were sent the questionnaire, 50.83 percent responded. A second questionnaire, a duplicate of the first one mailed, was mailed on March 17, 1972 to the remaining 49.17 percent who had not responded to the first questionnaire. An additional 22.5 percent of the questionnaires were received. A total of 73.33 percent responded to the questionnaire.

Analysis of Data

The questionnaire was constructed to collect information of the following nature:

1. Marital status
2. Age groups
3. Occupations
4. Whether employed at present
5. Level of education
6. Courses that were taken
7. When classes were attended
8. Reasons for attending classes
9. Whether job was acquired
10. Whether adequate knowledge was received
11. Additional comments

The results of these questions were then tabulated and recorded according to the numbers and percentages of those responding.

Summary

A questionnaire was constructed and mailed to those who had attended the adult office skills courses during the years of 1968 to 1970. This chapter has given the procedures followed in conducting this study. In Chapter 4 are presented the results of the survey.

CHAPTER IV
RESULTS OF STUDY

To determine the worthwhile values that the students of the Bozeman adult skills courses received, to learn which of those who had received office employment, and to use the results in planning a more meaningful adult program, 120 questionnaires were sent to former students who attended classes from 1968 to 1970. Eighty-eight of the former students responded to the questionnaire, or 73.3 percent.

Marital Status of the Students. Of the 88 who responded to the questionnaire, the largest number were married. An equal number said they were married as to the number who said they were divorced. Table 1 shows the number and percentage of those who responded as to their marital status.

TABLE I. STUDENTS' MARITAL STATUS BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Marital Status	Number	Percentage
Single	6	6.82%
Married	76	86.36%
Divorced	6	6.82%
Total	88	100.00%

Age Groups of the Respondents. Rather than being asked for their specific ages, the students simply checked the age group with which they were identified. Ages of the adults they are teaching is an important guide when an adult teacher plans his courses. The largest number of respondents, 20, were in the "50--" age group. Table II shows the number and percentage of students in each age group.

TABLE II. AGE GROUPS OF RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Age Group	Number	Percentage
18-24	11	12.50%
25-29	10	11.36%
30-34	9	10.23%
35-39	13	14.77%
40-44	15	17.05%
45-49	10	11.36%
50--	20	22.73%
Total	88	100.00%

Various Occupations of the Respondents. The survey showed that most of those who responded to the questionnaire were employed as secretaries, 14, and 12 were employed as business clerks. Twenty five of those who responded did not answer this question. The occupations of the respondents are listed in Table III.

TABLE III. VARIOUS OCCUPATIONS OF THE RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Occupations	Number	Percentage
Housewife	18	20.45%
Secretary	14	15.90%
Business Clerk	12	13.63%
Clerk	3	3.41%
Cook	3	3.41%
Deputy County Assessor	2	2.27%
Bozeman Police	2	2.27%
Unemployed	2	2.27%
Bookkeeper	1	1.14%
Multilith Operator	1	1.14%
Dental Assistant	1	1.14%
Student - MSU	1	1.14%
Assistant Food Manager	1	1.14%
Waitress	1	1.14%
Office Manager	1	1.14%
No reply	25	28.41%
Total	88	

Employment of the Respondents. The former students were asked whether they were presently employed. Fifty eight, or 65.9 percent

said they were now employed and 30, or 34.1 percent responded "No" to the question. Of those who were employed, 70.7 percent were employed full-time. Table IV shows the number and percentage of those employed--full-time and part-time.

TABLE IV. EMPLOYMENT OF THE RESPONDENTS--FULL-TIME AND PART-TIME BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Employed	Number	Percentage
Yes	58	65.91%
No	30	34.09%
Total	88	100.00%

Full-time	41	70.69%
Part-time	17	29.31%
Total	58	100.00%

Level of Education of the Respondents. The largest percentage of the respondents, 56.82 percent reported that they had completed Grade 12. Only 9.09 percent had not graduated from high school. A surprisingly high percentage, 34.09 percent had received a college education. The grade levels completed by the students is further shown in Table V, shown on page 22.

TABLE V. LEVEL OF EDUCATION OF THE RESPONDENTS BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Grade	Number	Percentage
8	1	1.14%
9	3	3.41%
10	2	2.27%
11	2	2.27%
12	50	56.82%
13	8	9.09%
14	14	15.91%
15	5	5.68%
16	3	3.41%
Total	88	100.00%

Courses in which the Respondents Enrolled. Of the six courses listed (Beginning Typing, Intermediate Typing, Advanced Typing, Business Machines, Shorthand I, and Shorthand II) Intermediate Typing was listed most frequently of the courses in which the students were enrolled.

Speedwriting was inadvertently omitted on the questionnaire and it was written in on the questionnaire by several of the students. Thus, Speedwriting was included in the analysis of the data.

Since many of the students were enrolled in more than one course during the three years in which the study was conducted, the number of

students enrolled in all seven of the classes totaled more than 88, the total number of respondents in the survey. Table VI shows the number and percentage of those enrolled in each of the seven classes.

TABLE VI. COURSES IN WHICH THE RESPONDENTS ENROLLED BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Course Title	Number	Percentage
Beginning Typing	24	27.27%
Intermediate Typing	33	37.50%
Advanced Typing	10	11.36%
Business Machines	17	19.32%
Shorthand I	17	19.32%
Shorthand II	10	11.37%
Speedwriting	12	13.64%
Total	88	100.00%

Number of Courses in Which the Respondents Enrolled. The largest percentages of those responding said they had enrolled in one class. Only one person had enrolled in all six of the classes listed on the questionnaire. The number of courses in which the students had enrolled is shown in Table VII, page 24.

Year and Quarter in Which the Respondents Attended Classes. It is significant to know during which quarter most of the students attended

classes. The results showed the highest enrollment in classes during the winter quarter, 45.7 percent. This is probably evidenced by a lack of winter activities. Thus, people found other interests such as adult classes of which they attended. The number of students enrolled by each quarter and each year are presented in Table VIII, page 25.

TABLE VII. NUMBER OF COURSES IN WHICH THE RESPONDENTS ENROLLED BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Number of Courses	Number	Percentage
One	67	76.14%
Two	13	14.77%
Three	4	4.55%
Four	2	2.27%
Five	1	1.14%
Six	1	1.14%
Total	88	100.00%

Reasons Why Students Enrolled in the Office Skills Courses. Knowing why students enrolled in specific courses can be valuable to the instructor in planning the courses. The results of the survey showed that the largest percentage of the students had enrolled to learn skills with which to obtain a job. Since many indicated more than one reason for attending classes, 104 responses were recorded. Table IX

TABLE VIII. YEAR AND QUARTER IN WHICH THE RESPONDENTS ATTENDED CLASSES BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Year	No. Enrolled Fall	No. Enrolled Winter	No. Enrolled Spring	Yearly No.	Yearly %
1968	7	15	11	33	31.43%
1969	11	15	9	35	33.33%
1970	10	18	9	37	35.24%
Total	28	48	29	105	100.00%

shows the number and percentages of the students' responses for their reasons for attending the office skills courses. Table IX is shown below.

TABLE IX. REASONS WHY THE STUDENTS ENROLLED IN THE OFFICE SKILLS COURSES BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Reasons for Enrolling in Class	Number	Percentage
To receive high school credit	5	4.76%
To upgrade skills for the job presently held	33	31.43%
To learn skills to obtain a job	36	34.29%
For pleasure	31	29.52%
Total		100.00%

Whether Students Received Employment as a Result of the Courses in Which They Enrolled. The largest number of students had enrolled in the courses to obtain employment (as shown in Table IX). When asked if they had actually received employment as a result of the courses in which they had enrolled, the students' replies showed that approximately an equal number had received employment as those who had not. A total of 19.32 percent had replied "Yes", and 18.18 percent had replied "No". The question was not applicable to 62.5 percent so they did not reply.

Whether Students Received Adequate Knowledge in the Courses in Which They Enrolled. A large majority of the students responded that they had received adequate knowledge in the courses. Only 23.86 percent replied that they had not. Many of those replying "No" stated such reasons as, "The length of the course was too short"; and "I did not finish the course." The reasons as stated by the students who felt they had not received adequate knowledge in the courses in which they enrolled are shown in Appendix C.

Comments of the Former Adult Students. The students were asked to give their comments of opinions regarding the adult business skills courses in which they had previously been enrolled. The writer felt that if the students, if presented an open question, may have some useful suggestions in planning a better adult program. Some of the students comments are presented in Appendix D.

Further Analysis. After analyzing the responses to the questions on the questionnaire, the writer decided to do some further analyzing of the respondents who were employed. Comparisons were made of those

employed with respect to their educational level, their age, how many were employed in office work, and the age groups of those employed in office work.

Educational Level of those Employed. Of those who were employed, 66.7 percent had completed the twelfth grade. Another 14 percent had completed their second year of college. Table X presented the education completed by the 57 who were employed.

TABLE X. EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF THOSE EMPLOYED BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Grade Completed	Number	Percentage
8	0	00.00%
9	2	3.51%
10	1	1.75%
11	1	1.75%
12	38	66.66%
13	4	7.02%
14	8	14.04%
15	2	3.51%
16	1	1.75%
Total	57	100.00%

Ages of Those Employed. Of those who were employed, the largest number were over the age of 50. This fact is quite contrary to the

popular idea held by many who think that jobs are nonexistent for those over the age of 35. Table XI shows the number and percentage of those who were employed in each age group.

TABLE XI. AGES OF THE RESPONDENTS WHO WERE EMPLOYED BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Age Group	Number	Percentage
18-24	7	12.28%
24-29	7	12.28%
30-34	7	12.28%
35-39	8	14.04%
40-44	8	14.04%
45-49	9	15.79%
50--	11	19.30%
Total	57	100.00%

Those Employed in Office Work. The responses of those who were employed showed that 75.4 percent were employed in office work of some type (secretary, bookkeeper, business clerk, et.) These results show that the largest number who enroll in the business skills courses hold positions in offices.

Age Groups of Those Who Were Employed in Office Work. Of those 45 who responded who were employed in offices, approximately 21 percent,

the largest percentage were in the "45-49" age group. Again, this fact apparently disproved the idea that older persons could not find office work. Table XII shows the number and percentage of the respondents' ages who were employed in office work.

TABLE XII. AGES OF THE RESPONDENTS WHO WERE EMPLOYED IN OFFICE WORK BY NUMBER AND PERCENTAGE

Age Group	Number	Percentage
18-24	7	16.28%
25-29	4	9.30%
30-34	4	9.30%
35-39	6	13.95%
40-44	7	16.28%
45-49	9	20.93%
50--	6	13.95%
Total	43	100.00%

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

One of the most effective methods of determining how well a school is serving the needs of its students is through obtaining the opinions of the students themselves. After completing the course and a lapse of several years, the students can disclose what they did or did not gain or find useful about the course in which they enrolled. They can be an exceptional source in planning better programs, especially in the adult educational program.

SUMMARY

To obtain the information needed in the study, the students who attended the adult office skills classes during the years from 1968 to 1970 were mailed questionnaires to receive their responses. Of the 120 who were mailed questionnaires, 88 responded, or a 73 percent return. These results were tabulated by the number and percentage of those responding as was presented in Chapter IV. The students' comments were recorded in the appendixes.

The review of literature was made from the materials in the Montana State University library. The literature researched pertained to three areas: (1) the needs and purposes of adult education; (2)

related studies in adult educational programs; and (3) follow-up studies conducted in Montana. The writer found that adult education is increasingly on the rise. Adult education has grown from an increase in the need for skilled labor and has also grown from the increased leisure time with which Americans have been presented.

Jewell's study in Lovell, Wyoming about adult education showed that the course offerings should coincide with the growing season of the community, second level courses should be offered, a wider variety of classes should be offered, and classes should start early enough to be finished by the Christmas holidays.

From the survey taken of the Bozeman adult skills program, the following conclusions were drawn.

CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions drawn by the writer were based upon the review of literature, and the results of the questionnaires. The conclusions drawn are as follows:

1. Contrary to popular opinion, the largest percentage of the respondents who were employed in office work were over the age of 50.
2. Most of the respondents were generally satisfied with the present adult office skills program.
3. Of those not satisfied with the program, many wished to have less time between quarters so that they would not forget the material they had already learned.

4. Qualified teachers are as necessary at the adult level as at any other level of learning. Several of the respondents showed dissatisfaction toward their teacher.

5. Since there is a lower enrollment during spring quarter, perhaps more publicizing should be made of the courses to be offered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The writer wishes to see further studies made in the adult education area. Since this was the first study of its kind made at Bozeman's adult program, more studies could prove to be of value. Continuous periodic follow-up studies should be conducted at every institution of any level of learning.

The writer also would like to see the files of the former students kept up-to-date. Having the students' present addresses recorded would make it easier to contact these students when the occasion would arise.

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Appendix A

INTRODUCTION LETTER AND
QUESTIONNAIRE TO GRADUATES

Willson Building
404 West Main Street
Bozeman, MT 59715
February 23, 1972

Dear Former Student,

Will you help me to plan a better program for the adult education program at the Bozeman Vocational-Technical School? In partial fulfillment of the requirements for my Master's Degree at Montana State University, I am conducting a survey of the students who enrolled in the business skills courses in the adult education program at the Bozeman Vocational-Technical School.

The purpose of my survey is threefold:

1. To determine the worthwhile values that you received from your studies;
2. To determine the number of students who actually obtained jobs;
3. To use the results of this study in planning a more meaningful adult program in office education.

Your filling out and returning the enclosed questionnaire in the self-addressed, stamped envelope would be most helpful to me and to future adult students. Please complete the questionnaire and return it today. Thank you for your cooperation!

Sincerely,

Ethel Whitmer

(Miss) Ethel Whitmer
Bozeman Vo-Tech School

Enclosures

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1. NAME (Optional) _____
2. MARITAL STATUS: (Check one) _____ Single _____ Married _____ Divorced
3. AGE: (Check one)
- | | | | |
|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| _____ 18 to 24 | _____ 30 to 34 | _____ 40 to 44 | _____ 50--- |
| _____ 25 to 29 | _____ 35 to 39 | _____ 45 to 49 | _____ and above |
4. OCCUPATION _____
5. Are you presently employed? ____ Yes ____ No If so: ____ Full-time ____ Part-time
6. What level of education have you completed? (Check one)
- _____ 8 _____ 9 _____ 10 _____ 11 _____ 12 _____ 13 _____ 14 _____ 15 _____ 16
7. Which course(s) in the office business field did you take while attending the adult education evening program? (Check those applicable)
- | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|
| _____ Beginning Typing | _____ Advanced Typing | _____ Shorthand I |
| _____ Intermediate Typing | _____ Business Machines | _____ Shorthand II |
8. Which year and quarter did you attend classes? (Check those applicable)
- | | | |
|--------------------|--------------|------------|
| 1968: _____ Winter | _____ Spring | _____ Fall |
| 1969: _____ Winter | _____ Spring | _____ Fall |
| 1970: _____ Winter | _____ Spring | _____ Fall |
9. Why did you enroll in the course(s)? (Check those applicable)
- _____ To receive high school credit;
- _____ To upgrade skills for the job presently held;
- _____ To learn skills to obtain a job;
- _____ For pleasure
10. If you enrolled in the course(s) to obtain a job, were you able to acquire a job requiring the skills that you learned? ____ Yes ____ No
11. Do you believe that you received adequate knowledge in the course(s) in which you enrolled? ____ Yes ____ No If no, why? _____
12. If you have any additional comments or opinions regarding the business course(s) in which you enrolled through the Bozeman adult education program and the effect they had upon you, please include them in the space provided:
- _____
- _____

Appendix B

SECOND LETTER TO GRADUATES WHICH ACCOMPANIED
QUESTIONNAIRE SHOWN IN APPENDIX A

404 West Main
Bozeman, MT 59715
March 17, 1972

Former Student:

Several weeks ago, I sent to you a letter and a questionnaire to be filled out. Perhaps you did not receive them, so I am sending you the questionnaire in duplicate form.

As mentioned in the previous letter, this is a survey of those students who attended classes in the office skills area of the Bozeman adult educational program.

Your response will represent a more accurate measure of the study that I am doing for my Master's Degree at Montana State University. Please fill out and return the questionnaire today.

Sincerely,

Ethel Whitmer

(Miss) Ethel Whitmer

Enclosures

Appendix C

QUOTED COMMENTS BY THE STUDENTS AS TO WHY THEY DID NOT
RECEIVE ADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE IN THE COURSES

QUOTED COMMENTS BY THE STUDENTS AS TO WHY THEY DID NOT
RECEIVE ADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE IN THE COURSES

1. Insufficient time.
2. Course didn't continue long enough for speed.
3. At that time there was far too much material covered too quickly.
4. I cannot give a fair account because I was not able to attend all the classes and was far behind and became discouraged and needed home practice.
5. I wasn't able to complete the course due to a time conflict.
6. Span between classes too far apart and not enough practice to become proficient and have it retained for very long.
7. I was too busy with my job and housework to give it enough time outside the class.
8. Not enough help from the teachers.
9. Schedule conflict and I didn't complete the course.
10. Not enough free time at home for shorthand practice.
11. I was not able to get up much speed in just one quarter. I had planned to take the second quarter, but not enough students enrolled to hold the course.
12. The teacher didn't speak loud enough and didn't seem to be concerned about the class.
13. I should have taken a follow-up course to give speed.
14. The teacher didn't teach between the beginning and intermediate. It was too advanced for several in the class that hadn't had typing for several years.
15. I felt I learned nothing that I had not learned before. We spent so much time on basic information that a beginner should know.
16. Many of the standards for typing are lower than my previous training. One of the students had to teach me to run the dictaphone--the teacher couldn't remember how.

17. I was unable to complete the second part of the course due to work hours.
18. I attended fall quarter and then became ill and couldn't return to finish.

Appendix D

QUOTED COMMENTS OF THE STUDENTS

QUOTED COMMENTS OF THE STUDENTS

1. Extremely helpful to working people.
2. I had not worked for about 17 years, and the course made me feel that I was still capable of going to work and holding a job.
3. This course helped two ways: first I benefitted in the additional education, and second, the knowledge that I was willing to attend the Bozeman Vo-Tech helped me in my boss-employee relationship. At my age, this is very important to show that I am still willing to learn new ways and methods.
4. I took the courses to acquire skills in the case the day ever came that I had to go to work. But I thoroughly enjoyed the key punch class.
5. At the time I enrolled in the course, I was employed as a full-time secretary at MSU. I had formerly had training in Gregg Shorthand. I thought that it was completely forgotten, but found that I hadn't forgotten it, and it made it almost impossible to learn the Speedwriting. I dropped the Speedwriting.
6. I enjoyed the accounting course, although I felt we had to hurry it through. The other courses were disappointing, but for the price, I guess I couldn't be too fussy. I think the principle is great and something that is really needed and an important supplement to the "college education."
7. I enjoy taking adult education. They are a good way to learn new skills and sharpen old at a reasonable cost and I hope more courses as well as the usual classes continue to be offered.
8. If the shorthand classes could both be sold to the student at enrollment time so that they get more from the classes.
9. I feel that a person should take both "I and II" of the course to really benefit from it, especially if you are not working at the time, and do have a chance to apply what you are learning.
10. I would like to take several more, but find it too hard on oneself to drive that far and take courses when one is working.
11. I enjoyed going back to school and encourage others when an opportunity arises.
12. I feel this adult education class is very good for anyone taking them. It gave me more confidence in my job.

13. I wouldn't have had the nerve to have taken a job without the courses I took. I believe we were taught as much as possible in the period of time we had. I do wish we'd have been able to learn more about office machines--ten-key and dictaphone. Our time was short and the supply inadequate. Also don't forget to teach the gals the intercom system of an office. It is simple, but how embarrassing for new help to cut of a VIP.
14. I feel that my filling out this questionnaire is not a fair evaluation of the course since I only attended about four classes and withdrew. My reason for withdrawing from the course was a personal reason and had nothing to do with the course.
15. At the time, I was a legal secretary and was trying to gain speed in the use of a senograph shorthand machine which I had not used for years. The dictation class in shorthand was at too slow a speed (90-100 w.p.m.) as I already was attaining the 150 w.p.m. classification and was trying for a minimum of 200 w.p.m. I soon dropped out of the class. As I expected something above the level at which the course was offered, it is not a fair judgment to answer question 11 in the negative. I am now working as a secretary to a dean at MSU.
16. I took 17 years of academic courses. I was unable to find work in my chosen field. I took typing and currently I'm employed as a secretary. The typing course was one of the least interesting and enjoyable, but probably one of the most helpful.
17. Returning to work (legal secretary) after many years required brushing up on my shorthand. The course gave me the confidence I needed. I was glad the program was available.
18. Although there is still a lot of emphasis on shorthand, it is interesting to note that one of the two American women first allowed into China (Henry Kissinger's private secretary) took notes at the meetings in speedwriting, not Gregg shorthand.
19. I will say that when I applied for the job I now have, I didn't get it because I was or had taken the course. But I will say that because I was furthering my training had some bearing on them choosing me over other applicants.
20. I was working at the Financial Aid Office at the time I took typing at Vo-Tech. Since I was doing a lot of typing and had not used a typewriter since high school, I was very pleased that Bozeman had night school. This enabled me to do a better job.
21. I had no previous typing and took these courses in order to better myself, which I did.

22. I think the course I took was very good and up-to-date, good instructor, and gave me confidence to look for a job.
23. Besides being of academic value, it also increased opportunities to meet new people. Being a full-time employee and housewife, I appreciated the opportunity to get away from my regular duties for a short time.
24. I took a typing course to upgrade my typing for our own business.
25. Due to unfortunate circumstances, I was unable to finish the typing course that I had signed up for, but thought it was a worthwhile cause and would recommend it to other students.
26. I think they're a good idea. The only suggestion would be more variety, but I'm sure the budget is limited in what can be offered.
27. Teachers didn't seem much interested if we understood or not. One time our teacher didn't show up--a trip or something.
28. I feel I got my money's worth.
29. There was a lot of material given everyone in the class that would be very good reference material for anyone working as a secretary.
30. I enrolled to upgrade my typing skills and speed. I was very satisfied with the course and know I benefitted from it.
31. Typing should be a required high school course, not optional.
32. They did not notify me when the second session began till the evening of the said session and I was gone. I tried to find out the time for myself by phone, but got no adequate reply.
33. I would like to see Vo-Tech teach courses and let the students work at their own level and speed, and not drive and push. It isn't fair for an older person to compete with high school students. I know of no students that enrolled in the fall of 1968 and completed the course. Many didn't finish for various reasons.
34. Don't take them for high school credit unless you work or plan to work. There are cheaper ways to get credits and you forget these courses too fast if you don't use them.
35. The business courses I was satisfied with, but the school itself, I was very unhappy with.
36. I didn't complete the course due to personal reasons. Even with my small amount of knowledge with typing, I was able to work part-time in an office in Helena while we lived there.