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DELDIN, BETTY ZELESTINE

A DESCRIPTIVE AND ANALYTICAL STUDY ON ADULT STUDENTS WHO
VOLUNTARILY WITHDREW FROM MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
DURING FALL TERM, 1979

Michigan State University

PH.D.

1980

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A DESCRIPTIVE AND ANALYTICAL STUDY ON ADULT STUDENTS
WHO VOLUNTARILY WITHDREW FROM MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY DURING FALL TERM, 1979

By

Betty Zelestine DelDin

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Department of Administration and Higher Education

1980

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1980

ABSTRACT

A DESCRIPTIVE AND ANALYTICAL STUDY ON ADULT STUDENTS WHO VOLUNTARILY WITHDREW FROM MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY DURING FALL TERM, 1979

By

Betty Zelestine DelDin

The major purpose of the study was to identify the adult student population over 25 years of age, full and part-time, graduate and undergraduate, who voluntarily withdrew from Michigan State University. Particular attention was given to the students' reasons for withdrawal and their degree of satisfaction with varying aspects of the university community. The researcher also attempted to ascertain which of the reasons given for withdrawal might be amenable to remedial action by the university. Utilizing this data, intervention strategies were developed which the university might undertake to retain a higher percentage of the adult student population.

A questionnaire developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was selected as a model for the questionnaire used in this study. Some modifications to the NCHEMS questionnaire were necessary to adapt it to a study of within-term withdrawal of adult students.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of 15 items which covered demographic and academic background information of the adult student respondents. The remainder of the questionnaire was divided

into four general categories: reasons for entering and re-entering college; reasons for withdrawing from the university; degree of satisfaction with varying aspects of the university; and plans for the future. In addition, an interview guide was developed and 23 adult students were interviewed.

The Chi-Square Test was utilized in analyzing the data and the .05 level of significance was adopted as a criterion for all testing.

Proportionately more women than men withdrew fall term, 1979. The majority were in the 26-30 age group, were part-time students, full time employees and reported GPA above 2.5. The majority of the adults were also married; however, there were more men who were married than women, and more women who were divorced than men. The single students were equally divided among men and women.

Overall, the married students were almost equally divided as to whether they had or did not have children; however, the married and divorced women over 30 had substantially more children than did married women in the 26-30 age group and married men in both age groups.

The major reasons reported most often by adult students for withdrawing, in order of priority, were: conflict between job and studies; found study too time consuming; home responsibilities were too great; needed a temporary break from studies; personal problems; and not enough money to go to school.

In general, the adult students who withdrew, seemed most satisfied with the university in general and its location; the quality of the faculty; and the intellectual stimulation. The adult students

seemed least satisfied with the scheduling of classes; the cost of attending the university; the amount of contact with instructors; the academic advising services; getting into desired classes; and opportunities to interact with peers.

The following intervention strategies were developed as a result of major research findings and adult student input. Success, however, is dependent upon institutional commitment to make some changes to meet adult student needs. The university should: consider increasing the number and variety of evening classes; develop a continuous orientation program for faculty and staffs who work with adult students; schedule some office hours convenient for adult students; develop more diversified methods of instruction; and develop or adapt certain administrative procedures to meet adult student needs. The university should also acquaint every adult student with the kinds of financial aid available; make adult students aware of the kinds of counseling and support services available; develop special orientation programs for new and returning adult students; and develop a centrally located meeting place where the adult students could become acquainted with their peers, study, and relax.

For Mom and Dad

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

With deepest love, I dedicate this dissertation to my parents, Lucian and Mabel DelDin. The opportunities they afforded me, their abiding love, faith, and encouragement, made this achievement possible.

Special appreciation and heartfelt thanks go to my major professor and friend, Dr. Sheldon Cherney, for his belief in me and for his constant support, encouragement, and guidance, without which this dissertation would not have been completed.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

There is evidence to support that the traditional age college student population is on the decline. Michigan public secondary schools are expected to lose one-fifth of their enrollment during the decade 1975-1984 (Michigan's School Enrollment Decline, Task Force, 1977). This projected decline is of particular importance to Michigan State University since 90 percent of the university's first-time undergraduate enrollments come from the high schools of Michigan (Annual Evaluation Report, April 1979, p. 3).

Attracting and retaining the adult student at the university would aid in counteracting the decline of the traditional 18-22 year old students. The current withdrawal rate for adult students would suggest that better methods of retention are needed.

The total fall term 1979 enrollment at Michigan State University was 44,756 students. Of this number, 7,547 (16.84%) were adult students over 25 years of age (Office of the Registrar, Fall 1979). During fall term, a total of 556 students withdrew from the university. Of this number, 382 (68.71%) were of traditional age, and 174 (31.29%) were adult students over 25 years of age (Office of Student Withdrawals, Fall 1979).

Origin of the Study

The topic was selected as a result of this writer's increasing awareness of the number of adult students who voluntarily withdraw within a given term. This awareness developed through her role as a staff member of the Vice President for Student Affairs and Services, responsible for conducting exit interviews for all students who voluntarily withdraw within a given term at Michigan State University.

During the 1976-77 academic year, this writer collected raw data on the number of adult students who withdrew each term. The data indicated that out of the nearly 600 students who voluntarily withdrew during each term from a total student population of 43,749, fall 1976; 41,885, winter 1977; and 39,779, spring 1977 (Office of the Registrar, 1976-77); more than 25 percent were adults students over 25 years of age (Office of Student Withdrawals, 1976-77).

The knowledge that such a high percentage of students withdrawing from Michigan State University consisted of adults, whetted the researcher's need to identify these individuals and their reasons for leaving.

Purpose of the Study

Specifically, the researcher sought to discover:

1. The characteristics of adult students who voluntarily withdraw within the first eight weeks of fall term, 1979.
2. What factors contributed to their decision to withdraw.
3. Which of these factors were university related.

4. The number and percentage of adult students who leave for reasons amenable to remedial action by the university.
5. The number and percentage of adult students who leave for reasons which are not amenable to remedial action by the university.
6. Intervention strategies which Michigan State University might take to retain a higher percentage of its adult student body.

Selection of Subjects

The researcher studied the reasons why part-time and full-time adult students over 25 years of age voluntarily drop all of their courses prior to the end of the eighth week of fall term 1979 at Michigan State University. Based on raw data collected during the academic year 1976-77, the researcher anticipated working with a group of approximately 150 adult students.

Significance of the Study

Since 1957, the birth rate has dropped from a peak of 3.8 children per woman to a record low in 1976 of 1.8. Although the birth rate may rise somewhat in the next quarter century, any significant increase is highly improbable (Weinstock, 1978, pp. 17-18).

A 1977 report of the Michigan Department of Education Task Force states that Michigan's public secondary schools (grades 7-12) will lose one-fifth of their enrollment during the decade 1975-1978. By 1990, Michigan senior high schools (grades 9-12) will have lost almost one-third of their present enrollment (Michigan's School Enrollment Decline, 1977).

Hecker and Ignatovich used birth statistics for the years up to 1979 to project public school enrollments for the State of Michigan. They project a decline in 12th grade Michigan enrollments of about 30 percent by 1995. Two-thirds of that decline is expected between 1980 and 1985 (Annual Evaluation Report, April 1979, p. 3).

The decline in projected public school enrollments for Michigan is of particular importance for Michigan State University. The April 1979, Annual Evaluation Report, used for projecting enrollments at Michigan State University, prepared by the Office of Institutional Research, states that:

90 percent of Michigan State University's first time undergraduate enrollment flows directly from Michigan high schools. . . . If we can assume that our share of the 12th grade Michigan enrollment pool will remain the same, we will have a 30 percent loss of first time undergraduates by 1990. . . . Undergraduate transfer students represent about 19 percent of the total undergraduates. There is some evidence that current enrollment of transfer students is weakening already. (p. 5)

As reported in the January 8, 1979 issue of the Chronicle of Higher Education (pp. 12-13), preliminary figures show 60,000 fewer students enrolled in colleges and universities across the United States. This indicated drop in enrollment would be the second in three years, after 34 years of uninterrupted growth.

The Carnegie Commission, in its final report, stated that: "Higher education will no longer be a growth industry unless an entirely new constituency can be attracted to its institutions, and unless continuing education becomes an accepted pattern in our society" (Glenny, 1973, p. 6).

Partly in response to the legitimacy of the concept of lifelong learning and to a concern about "new markets" to counteract a decline in full-time 18-22 year old student enrollments, colleges and universities are focusing attention on the new clientele to higher education, the adult learner (Weinstock, 1978, p. 13).

A recent U.S. Census Bureau study reported that 19.5 percent (1,640,000) of the undergraduate population were 25 years old and over. In 1970, those students over 25 years, constituted 12 percent (750,000) of the population ("Social and Economic Characteristics of Students," March 1978, p. 6).

Between 1973 and 1974, the Bureau of the Census reported a 30.1 percent increase in part-time enrollments in degree programs at colleges and universities for students over 35 years of age. This constituted 11.6 percent of the total enrollments in colleges and universities (Chronicle of Higher Education, May 17, 1975, p. 1).

A similar trend seems to be occurring at Michigan State University among both full-time and part-time enrollments. Between 1970 and 1978, the percentage of adult undergraduate students over 25 years of age moved from 4 to 6 percent. Meanwhile, the percentage of adult graduate students over 25 years of age moved from 53 to 63.5 percent (Office of the Registrar, Fall 1970 and Fall 1978).

Consequently, a study of this kind assumes a special importance as the nature of the university population shifts to include a larger percentage of adult learners.

It would appear that many universities must learn to accommodate and adjust to this new clientele, just to sustain themselves. Yet, it is a fact that most adults who start or re-enter fail to finish their academic programs (Harrington, 1977, p. 5).

Most institutions seem to have very little empirical knowledge regarding withdrawals among the adult students, nor do they have data regarding remedial actions which might be taken to retain such students.

Definition of Terms

Adult students. Those undergraduate and graduate students who are over 25 years of age as of fall term, 1979.

Within term withdrawal. The dropping of all courses by a student prior to the end of the eighth week of the term.

Internal factors. The interactions which occur between the individual and the institution.

External factors. Those interactions which occur outside of the university, over which the university may have no direct control.

Reasons amenable to remedial action through the university.

Illustrative of this category are:

- Need for financial aid opportunities;
- Need for academic/advising services;
- Need for counseling/guidance services;
- Need for child care facilities;
- Need for parking facilities;
- Dissatisfaction with course content;
- Dissatisfaction with major;
- Dissatisfaction with course scheduling practices;
- Attitudinal problems of faculty, administrators, clerical staffs;

- Rigidity of course requirements in major field;
- Insufficient contact opportunity with professors/advisors;
- Motivational problems; and
- Inadequate study techniques or habits.

Reasons not amenable to remedial action through the university.

Illustrative of this category are:

- Lack of study time;
- Inability to perform academically;
- Conflict between job and studies;
- Moving out of the area;
- Illness of the individual or family member;
- Death of a family member;
- Family problems;
- Commuting problems; and
- Marriage.

Methodology

An analysis was made of all part-time and full-time adult students over 25 years of age who withdrew voluntarily from Michigan State University during the first eight weeks of fall term, 1979. Such students were given a questionnaire to complete together with the "Withdrawal Application" and "Information Sheet" normally given to all students who come to the Office of Student Withdrawals. In addition, a questionnaire was also mailed to adult students who requested to be withdrawn by correspondence and to those adult students whose names appeared on a list supplied by the Registrar's Office as having dropped all of their courses during the university's "drop" period instead of withdrawing at the Withdrawal Office. This occurs primarily among students enrolled for only one course who don't associate dropping their only course as a withdrawal from the university. The questionnaire covered demographic information and internal and external factors which may have precipitated the student's decision to withdraw.

From the 174 adult students who withdrew during fall term, 1979, a quota sample of approximately every fourth adult student who withdrew at the Withdrawal Office, was selected to be interviewed by the researcher to supplement the information derived from the questionnaire.

Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was examined and selected as a model for the questionnaire used in this study. The questionnaire was part of a manual developed "to assess and understand better the phenomenon of decreasing enrollments caused by students dropping out, stopping out or transferring out of their institutions" (Bower & Myers, 1976, p. 6).

The procedures and materials in the manual were pilot tested during 1975 in four diverse postsecondary education institutions: The University of Colorado, Arapahoe Community College, Windham College, and The University of Southern Colorado (p. 3).

Statistical Design

The data were transferred from the questionnaire to standard 80 column computer cards and stored on computer tape. These data were computer analyzed using the Cyber 750 version of SPSS and the ISIS Data Retrieval and Analysis System.

Limitations of the Study

The study was limited to part-time and full-time adult students over 25 years of age, who voluntarily withdrew prior to the end of the eighth week of fall term, 1979, at Michigan State University.

It was assumed that all answers to the questionnaire and to the interview were sincere and forthright. To some degree, the study's validity depends on the extent to which adult students, who voluntarily withdrew, were able to provide honest, impartial, and unbiased reactions to the questions and to provide unbiased and honest responses.

Organization of the Study

Chapter II presents a selected review of the literature dealing with student withdrawals at college and university levels. The first part of the chapter focuses on research conducted on withdrawal of adult students; the second section describes the research completed on withdrawal of 18-22 year old undergraduate students and some models which were developed on the withdrawal process of traditional age students.

Chapter III describes the research methodology used to develop and analyze the study, procedures for designing the study, the development of the questionnaire, and data collection and analysis are discussed.

Chapter IV deals with the presentation and analysis of the data.

Chapter V summarizes the findings of the study, draws conclusions about the research findings, makes suggestions about possible intervention strategies, and recommends possible areas for further research.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Withdrawing from college has been a subject of extensive research in higher education. The literature review uncovered numerous studies on the traditional 18-22 year old college student and a dearth of such studies relating specifically to the adult student. There were no published studies found which were confined to the within-term withdrawal of the adult student from four-year colleges and universities.¹

In the first part of this chapter, studies will be presented that were conducted on withdrawal of adult students in undergraduate institutions, university extension courses, and adult education courses. The second part of this literature review will describe research completed on withdrawal of 18-22 year old undergraduate students and some models which were developed on the withdrawal process of traditional age students. Since the focus of this writer's study is on withdrawal of the adult student, the literature review for this particular section will be limited to a sample of studies completed during the past ten

¹Some of the sources of information used included: The Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) computer search; a Dissertation Abstracts and Dissertation Abstracts International search; Lawrence A. Little, A Bibliography of Doctoral Dissertations on Adults and Adult Education (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1963).

years. It would be impractical to review all the literature on the withdrawal of undergraduate students. However, the sparsity of available research on adult withdrawals, makes the inclusion of a sample of these studies necessary in order to have a point of reference from which to determine what common factors pertain both to the traditional students and to adult students who withdraw, and to determine if there are unique factors which affect only the adult students.

In the last part of the chapter, studies are described which pertain to intervention strategies used to increase undergraduate student retention. These intervention strategies are reviewed in Chapter V to determine possible relevance to adult students.

Withdrawal of Adult Students

Adults dropping out of educational activities in which they have been enrolled, has been perceived as a problem for a long time. It was not until the twentieth century, however, that any systematic investigation into the problem was initiated (Verner, 1964).

In a review of research relating to attendance in adult educational activities, Verner and Davies (1964) located thirty studies, dating back to 1928, which dealt with some aspect of attendance in adult education. Five of the thirty studies were conducted within a college or university adult education program; two of which were in evening colleges and one each in a junior college, a technical college, and university extension.

They reported no unanimity among the studies with respect to the identification of students who withdrew. Some studies included all

students who withdrew, while others excluded those who withdrew early in a course. Twenty-three of the studies provided no evidence of having treated the data for statistical significance. Seven studies reported the use of various tests of significance: two used the .01 level and five used the .05 level of confidence.

The research findings of Verner and Davies revealed that measurable differences existed between those who persisted and those students who withdrew.

Demographic factors. (Age) Five of the thirty studies, found that young adults withdrew more frequently than older adults; the remainder of the studies found that no differences existed. A few studies revealed a slight tendency toward a higher withdrawal rate among women.

Motivational factors. There was no agreement about the relationship between motivation and withdrawal. Some of the studies reported that those who enrolled for high school completion, hobby skills, or for job advancement, withdrew less frequently.

Students who had been active in community affairs were found to have a significantly lower withdrawal rate than those less active.

College environment. The distance traveled to attend classes appeared to have no significant relationship to the withdrawal rate, but the number of times classes met was found to affect attendance. Persistence was significantly better in classes that met once a week than any other frequency pattern.

Student satisfaction was shown to influence persistence. Students who withdrew tended to be much less satisfied with instruction

received than those who persisted. In addition, the withdrawal rate was significantly lower in those classes in which the participants were treated as equals by instructors.

Reported reasons for withdrawal. The studies which were completed during 1930 and 1940, showed that withdrawal for "school-related" reasons were ranked first by students who withdrew. Some of the criticism expressed by those who withdrew were: registration process, teaching methods, need for administrative improvements, and need for facility and material improvements.

Verner and Davies arrived at the following conclusions:

At the moment the evidence appears to indicate that those socio-economic characteristics which have been found to be related to participation are also related to persistence of attendance. Thus age, education, marital status, occupation, income, and rate of social participation, appear to be related to persistence of attendance. In no case, however, is the research sufficiently acute to clarify the nature and extent of the relationship.

Just as the socio-economic characteristics of persistent attenders is related to those of participants, so are the characteristics of dropouts related to those of non-participants. In other words, those people who do not normally participate actively in the on-going organized life of a community are more apt to discontinue attendance in adult education. . . . (p. 176)

Ulmer and Verner (1963) undertook a study in a Junior College Adult Program, to determine if there were any significant differences between those students who persisted in attendance and those who withdrew according to certain measurable factors such as age, sex, marital status, course load, veteran or non-veteran, number of class sessions per week, admission prerequisites, completion of prior semester, and

distance traveled to the institution. These factors were tested by statistical processes at the .01 level of confidence.

For this study, students who withdrew from classes during 1952-1956 were compared to those who did not. The results of their research revealed:

Demographic Factors

Age. The age of the student appeared no to be a factor which affected persistence. The "t" test was applied to each five-year unit age grouping in the study and no significant differences were found.

Sex. The average rate of withdrawal by sex was established by the researchers, at the expected frequency. No significant frequency showed for any semester when the chi-square test was applied to the male group; however, when the female rate was compared, the chi-square value was significant at the .01 level which indicated that there was a relationship between discontinuance and the sex of the student. Females were more apt to withdraw than male students.

Marital status. The student's marital status appeared to have no significant influence on persistence when the chi-square test was applied.

Academic Factors

Course load. The number of credits which a student had enrolled in any one term, appeared not to be a factor which affected student persistence. No significant relationships were found.

Class sessions. The number of times a class met during a week appeared to have a significant influence on persistence. When the

chi-square test was applied at the .01 level of confidence, it was found to be significant. There were significantly fewer absences in courses which met one night a week than in those which met more often.

Distance. The distance traveled to attend classes appeared not to be a significant influence on persistence.

Prior enrollment. Successful completion of a prior term(s) appeared not to be a significant factor which affected continuity of attendance.

Achievement. Attendance appeared to be related to achievement. Lower grades were earned by students who had the greater number of absences, and conversely, the fewer absences, the higher the grades. These results seemed to indicate that the organizational pattern for a course could adversely affect achievement.

The study also showed that nearly one-fourth of the students who withdrew did so during the first week of classes. These data, Verner and Davies reported, tended to emphasize the importance of pre-enrollment counseling as a means of changing the rate of withdrawal and recommended that in order to understand the withdrawal problem, the administrative structure and instructional processes needed also to be researched as well as the characteristics of the students who withdrew.

Zahn (1964) followed up on an earlier exploratory study she and Phillips completed in 1961, to determine whether students who withdrew from university extension courses differed in academic ability and anxiety level from those who completed. This study investigated the possibility that many students withdrew because their anxiety level

was too high; and secondly, that some students' academic ability to do college level work may be too low, and consequently withdrew when they discovered the kind of college level skills required of them.

The sample included 415 students who attended formal evening courses offered by the University of California Extension, Northern area. The measuring instruments used were the Henmon-Nelson Test of Mental Ability, College Level and the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale. These tests were administered at the third meeting of each class.

Zahn concluded that differences existed between credit and non-credit classes in discouraging or encouraging students of low academic ability to complete university extension courses. Withdrawal of low ability students from credit classes and high ability students from non-credit classes, may be the function of the professor's attitude toward the nature of the credit or non-credit class. It might also have been the effect of examinations and grades which discouraged low ability students from completing credit classes and the lack of grades and examinations, in encouraging the students to remain in non-credit classes. No statistically significant differences were found, however, in anxiety scores between students registered in credit and non-credit classes. There was no evidence to indicate that students scoring high on the anxiety scale preferred either credit or non-credit classes nor was there evidence to believe that average anxiety of the class influenced withdrawal activity.

From her study, Zahn drew the following hypothesis:

As there was no evidence to indicate that the presence of low ability students in the class affects the dropout behavior of the more academically able student, a reasonable hypothesis is that many other students may dropout of courses where constant information concerning achievement is an integral part of the instructional pattern. Students with low academic ability may give other, more socially acceptable or ego-sustaining responses to questionnaires rather than admit or even realize that they were embarrassed and discouraged by inadequate performance during the class. (p. 43)

Dickinson and Verner (1967) examined some of the characteristics used in previous research to differentiate those who withdrew from adult education classes and those who persisted. The characteristics used for this particular study were age, sex, marital status, number of dependents, educational level, occupation, previous attendance in adult education courses, and years resident in school district (a factor not previously studied). In addition to the personal characteristics, Verner and Dickinson, also studied situational factors of subject matter, course length, and travel time to class.

Registration data from 98 courses enrolling 2,075 persons in a public adult night school program in British Columbia, Canada, were used. Students were defined as having withdrawn if they did not attend the last two sessions of the course in which they had enrolled.

The results of the findings showed that there were statistically significant differences in withdrawal rates among subject matter categories. General interest courses were found to maintain attendance better than did either academic or vocational courses. The study also revealed that students who withdrew were found to have certain differentiating characteristics. Age, marital status, dependents, occupation,

and previous participation in adult education were found to be statistically significant characteristics which differentiated between those who persisted and those who withdrew. Dickinson and Verner concluded that "in general, the persistent attenders were older, married housewives who had children, while the dropouts were younger and usually single" (p. 33).

A study to determine the differential motivation of men and women adult education participants, and the relationship between motive for attendance and subsequent withdrawal from adult education classes, was completed by Boshier in 1971. The Education Participation Scale (EPS) (Boshier, 1971a) was administered to 233 randomly selected participants enrolled in classes at Wellington High School, University Extension and Workers Educational Association (WEA), Wellington, New Zealand. The scale was composed of 48 items which detailed reasons for participation. For this study, a "dropout" was defined as a person who was in attendance during the first two sessions of the course and absent from the mid-point session and four successive sessions of a continuing course.

The results of the study revealed that women, according to the 48 EPS items scored on a nine-point scale, were significantly more inclined than men to enroll in courses in order to seek social and intellectual stimulation. The study also indicated that adults who withdrew were more inclined to have enrolled for "deficiency" motives, e.g., "to meet members of the opposite sex," "to improve my social relationships"; while "persisters" were more inclined to have enrolled

to seek "some practical benefit." Boshier cautioned, however, that the correlation coefficient in the study only revealed that the two variables were related and were not to be confused with "causation."

The study revealed a large percentage of unexplained variance (95+%) for all the items on the test. This led Boshier to conclude that factors other than the sex of an individual were instrumental in determining whether or not an adult enrolled in an adult education class. The motive for attendance, while indirectly related to withdrawal behavior, was not a major source of variance.

He concluded that while his study did show that statistically significant relationships existed between motive for attendance, sex, and withdrawal, they were insubstantial because:

the pursuit of univariate correlates of complex behavior such as participation in and dropout from, an adult education course, is a somewhat blinkered approach to the problem. . . . This writer is satisfied that adult education participants drop out of class as a function of a complex interaction between social, psychological and environmental/institutional reasons. . . . To conclude, it can be stated that differential motivation characterized dropouts and persisters. (pp. 50-51)

In 1972, Boshier conducted another study using the Dropout Prediction Scale (DPS), which he developed. The scale was concerned with testing the relationship between the attitude toward withdrawal at the beginning of a course and subsequent withdrawal from that course. A list of self-referent adjectives used by students who withdrew, to describe themselves and their behavior, was assembled by Boshier during exit interviews with adult education dropouts conducted for an earlier study.

The study consisted of 66 randomly selected adults who completed the "persister form" of the DPS scale, and 115 adults, also randomly selected, who completed the "dropout form" of the scale. In addition, a third sample of adult extension participants, completed the "persister form" first, and then, four weeks later, the "dropout form."

Boshier's study revealed that students who considered a "persister" adult education participant to be significantly more worthy than a "dropout" participant, were less inclined to withdraw from class than those who viewed "dropouts" as more positive or the same as "persisters." These data, Boshier concluded, added credence to his previous research finding (1971), that "so-called non-course related" reasons for withdrawing are often used as a rationalization for withdrawing for "course related reasons." However, Boshier cautioned that "the notion that most dropout occurs for 'non-course' reasons is also a neat rationalization used by many adult educators for administrative inaction concerning dropout" (p. 98).

Bhainagar (1975) attempted to study factors affecting withdrawal of the part-time students who attended Sir George Williams campus of Concordia University, Canada. The sample consisted of new students who registered in the Mature Students Qualifying Program in the fall of 1971. His research revealed that a greater proportion of married than single students withdrew after the first year of university studies. Also, students who took a minimum amount of course work had a higher withdrawal rate. Moreover, he reported that the type of special training received prior to university entry was found to

be highly related to dropout/persistence after the first year. A higher persistence rate existed among students with commercial/secretarial and professional training, while those involved in technical, trade, or electronics, had a high withdrawal rate. The study also revealed that a student was more likely to complete his/her part-time studies if he/she did not begin immediately upon finishing high school. The data suggested that two years appeared to be the optimum working experience for persistence with part-time undergraduate studies. Not found to be related to withdrawal, was an inability to perform academically because of work conflict, or an inability to work satisfactorily because of academic interference.

In contrast to the general trend of research on traditional students which demonstrated that parental socio-economic status was positively related to persistence in college (Tinto, 1975), Bhalnagar's findings revealed that the socio-economic status of the parents was not a factor related to withdrawal and neither was the level of parental education related to withdrawal from college. He concluded that parental socio-economic status and other family characteristics, might be much more significant factors in younger, full-time students than appeared to be in the case for part-time students.

Bhalnagar reported, however, that financial support was not a major reason for persistence for the part-time student, although it would appear to ease the burden somewhat for the student.

Other data produced from Bhalnagar's study suggested that family size, e.g., the number of children, was not related to withdrawal from

college. The study revealed that students were much more likely to persist, whose spouses had some form of post-secondary education, however, the occupation of the spouse was not related to withdrawal.

While research indicated that family attitude was an important variable in the traditional college student's persistence (Hackman & Dysinger, 1970), Bhalnagar could not find a statistically significant relationship with college persistence when he looked at two indices of family attitude: spouse's attitude towards taking courses, and whether he/she was also taking courses.

Bhalnagar concluded that no one single factor in his study could explain withdrawal from higher education and it was obvious that it "is a multidimensional phenomenon" (p. 165).

Erickson (1968) studied undergraduates twenty-six years of age or older, who attended Michigan State University during fall term, 1966. She found that the reasons given for withdrawing from college for both men and women were somewhat similar to those given for not going to college from high school. Finances and marriage were the reasons most cited by college dropouts. For males, lack of interest, scholastic and military reasons were cited most often; for females, it was marriage, family responsibilities, and lack of interest. Erickson concluded that "reasons for dropping out of college may be somewhat complex" (p. 98).

In 1973, Boshier developed a model to explain adult education participation and withdrawal. The model was based on the concept that withdrawal from a course is in some ways an extension of non-participation; variables associated with one are associated with the

other. Both participation and withdrawal, according to the researcher, stem from "an interaction of internal psychological and external environmental variables." The model asserts that it is a participant's attitude about himself/herself as well as his/her attitude about the educational environment, that determines participation/non-participation and withdrawal/persistence.

From his previous study on "motives for attendance" in non-credit adult education classes, Boshier suggested that adult students could be characterized as being either "deficiency" or "growth" motivated. "Growth" motivated participants were defined as inner directed, and used adult education courses as a means of self expression. "Deficiency" motivated participants, on the other hand, were more afraid of their environment and seemed to use educational activities for achieving gratification of lower basic needs. Boshier contended that his theory was basically derived from similarities between Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and his factor analysis of "motives for attendance."

In Boshier's model, the adult student is considered as a "unified system" with two problems: maintaining inner harmony with himself/herself and with the educational environment. When incongruences develop within the person and between the person and his/her environment, anxiety occurs which causes an individual to adopt defensive strategies.

The model hypothesized that an adult student who enrolled for "deficiency" reasons was associated with "intra-self incongruence," and this lead to dissatisfaction with the educational environment.

Adult students who had enrolled for "growth" reasons found congruence within themselves and satisfaction with the educational environment. Boshier stated that this notion of congruence was primarily derived from Rogerian self psychology.

In support of parts of his model, Boshier gathered data from 2,436 participants enrolled in Continuing liberal non-credit courses at the Wellington High School Evening Institute, the Department of University Extension of Victoria University, and the Wellington Workers Educational Association, Australia. At the second session of each course, participants completed a questionnaire regarding their social, psychological, and demographic characteristics, and 233 randomly selected participants completed the Education Participation Scale (EPS).

Data to test the "congruence" part of the model were elicited by mail from students who withdrew and those who persisted. The instrument used was the Personality and Educational Environment Scales (PEES), which Boshier developed to predict and diagnose students who withdrew.

The results indicated that in all three institutions, persons enrolled for "deficiency" motives were significantly more inclined to withdraw than persons enrolled for "growth" motives. Some of the findings were: (1) men were neither more nor less inclined to drop out than women; (2) participants 20-30 years of age dropped out more than older (31-39) participants; (3) age of children and baby sitting arrangements while the parent attended class, was not related to withdrawal; and

(4) those who used public transportation withdrew more frequently than those using private means. Boshier concluded, however, that although the above conclusions were based on statistically significant findings,

no one social, psychological, or institutional variable accounts for a substantial amount of dropout variance. . . . These single variables act in "concert" with other congruence variables operating as single variables and in interaction, they are associated with dropout. (p. 278)

This model, Boshier stated, showed that reasons for non-participation and withdrawal did not reside exclusively within the student, but also rested with administrators to provide the necessary educational experiences which would match the students to their educational environments.

Summary of Adult Student Withdrawals

This section of the literature review on the withdrawal of the adult student, attempted to examine the reasons why adults withdrew from institutions of higher education before they completed their educational goals.

In reviewing the limited literature available, it became evident to the writer that there was no unanimity among the studies as to what constituted an adult student "dropout." In addition, earlier research provided no evidence of having treated the data for statistical significance. The more recent research, although statistically significant, has been primarily completed outside of the United States--in New Zealand and Canada.

In general, from the literature review, it would appear that the following factors contributed to adult student withdrawal:

- Studies suggest that younger, single students withdraw more frequently than older, married students. Women, however, are more likely to withdraw from their educational pursuits than men.
- It appears that adults who enroll for "deficiency" reasons are more likely to withdraw than those who enroll for growth benefits. In addition, adults who are not active community participants are more apt to withdraw.
- Spouse's level of education appears to be highly related to withdrawals. Students are more likely to persist if their spouses have had some post-secondary education.
- Students are more likely to withdraw if they enroll on a part-time basis immediately after high school or if they have had prior training in technical, trade, or electronics. Contrarily, a higher persistence rate existed among students with commercial/secretarial and professional training.
- The number of times a class meets during a week has a significant influence on persistence. In addition, a student's satisfaction with course instruction and an instructor's attitude toward his/her students affects persistence or withdrawal.

These findings have not, however, been consistently reported throughout the studies reviewed.

Studies suggest that withdrawal from an academic activity is a complex phenomenon, generally a consequence of numerous variables interacting between the student and his/her environment.

Withdrawal of Traditional Age Students

National Survey Studies

Iffert (1956) completed a nationwide study similar to the 1937 McNeely study and concluded that 40 percent of the entering freshmen never graduate. Iffert's 1957 study, which is considered to be a landmark, initiated the trend in attrition research. A sample of 12,667 students who entered 149 institutions of higher education in 1950 was studied. Iffert arrived, by extrapolation, at an estimate of "59 percent as the probable maximum percentage eventually graduating."

Astin's national study in 1972, College Dropouts: A National Profile, was based on data collected through the Cooperative Institutional Research Program of the American Council on Education and involved a four-year follow-up of the class of 1970. The major purpose of his study was to determine the current national dropout rate and how it differed among various institutions of higher education. Data were obtained from students attending a representative national sample of 217 two- and four-year colleges and universities. His principal findings were:

National dropout rates seem to be somewhat lower than has been suggested in other recent reports. Even by the most severe measure of persistence, nearly half of all students entering four-year colleges and universities can be classified as non-dropouts.

Dropout rates at two-year colleges are somewhat higher than those at four-year colleges and universities.

The principal predictors of persistence are the student's grades in high school and his scores on tests of academic ability. Other important predictors include being a man and a nonsmoker; having high degree aspirations at the time of college entrance; financing one's college education chiefly through aid from parents, scholarship, or personal savings; and not being employed during the school year.

Using these predictors of the student's persistence in a multiple regression equation, it is possible to compute an "expected" persistence rate for individual colleges. (p. 49)

The primary focus of another Astin study in 1975 was to identify ways to help students finish college. The data used in this study were both longitudinal and multi-institutional, consisting of 1968 freshmen who were followed up in 1972. Students were selected from a representative national sample of 358 two- and four-year colleges and universities. Approximately 300 students were selected randomly from each institution for a follow-up of approximately 101,000 students in 1972.

Astin's findings revealed that two students in three were persisters; one in ten was a stopout, and one student in four became a dropout. These figures suggested that the ability of students to persist in college had not deteriorated. More than half finished their undergraduate work within four years and another 12 percent were likely to finish their degrees within approximately another year. Of the one-fourth classified as dropouts, nearly half said they planned to eventually return to college to complete their degree. Astin reported the following:

Demographic factors. Women were more likely than men to complete the baccalaureate degree in four years and showed a persistence

rate of about 5 percent higher than for men; however, 3 percent more men attended graduate school. The data also showed that "dropout prone" freshmen were those with poor high school grades, low aspirations and poor study habits. Age was also associated with college attrition, i.e., older students, particularly older women, were more likely to withdraw than students of traditional age. Being married at the time of college entry increased women's chances of withdrawing by 11 percent, but decreased men's chances by approximately 8 percent.

Reported reasons for withdrawal by students. The most frequent reasons for withdrawing for both men and women were: boredom with courses, financial difficulties, dissatisfaction with requirements and regulations, and change in career plans.

Financial aid. Source and amount of financial aid can be an important factor in a student's ability to complete college. Financial support enhanced the ability to complete.

Employment. Having a part-time job on campus increased the chances of finishing college; however, full-time employment, particularly if it was off campus, had a negative impact.

Characteristics of the college. The type of institution students attended could have a significant impact on their chances of completing college. Students who attended a private university or a public four-year college in the northeastern or southern states increased their chances of completing college, while those who attended a two-year institution minimized their chances of completing college.

Matching student and institution. It appeared that, in general, persistence was enhanced if the student attended an institution in which the social backgrounds of other students resembled his or her own social background. Moreover, students persisted better if they attended college with students of similar ability. This finding, Astin stated, raised a serious question about the usual educational justification for "ability tracking" and selective admissions in public and private institutions.

In 1977, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), completed a national longitudinal study on students who withdrew from institutions of higher education. Private and public two- and four-year institutions were included in the study.

The major purpose of the study was to estimate the rate of student withdrawals, the reasons for withdrawal; the direct and indirect variables associated with withdrawals, and to describe what happened to students after they withdrew. The sample included some 10,000 students who initially enrolled in 1,800 colleges and universities throughout the United States. Students were considered withdrawn at four-year colleges if they had attended college in the first two years but were not enrolled in the fall of 1974. Approximately 24 percent of the students were classified as withdrawn, which reflected a lower rate of attrition than reported in previous findings. Some of the principal findings in the NCES study were:

Demographic factors. Sex differences were not significant. There was no evidence to support the suggestions that women have a

higher withdrawal rate than men as was previously reported. This difference was explained by the fact that this was a very recent study and was reflective of recent societal changes; that it was longitudinal in nature, and that transfers and stopouts were not included in the data.

Race. No substantial differences were found when race alone was considered. When the Socioeconomic Index (SES) and sex were considered, the withdrawal rates between whites and blacks were not significant, and when other variables were controlled, whites tended to have a higher withdrawal rate than Hispanics.

Socioeconomic Index (SES). Differences were found among SES groups. Family background, as measured by SES, was an important variable associated with withdrawals, particularly in four-year colleges.

Academic factors. In general, high school grades were more strongly related to withdrawal behavior than were standardized tests and were a better predictor.

Financial factors. Financial aid was a significant variable in relation to withdrawal behavior from four-year colleges. The data suggested that financial aid helped to increase persistence of low SES students and high aspiration students.

Motivational factors. The data revealed that a great proportion of withdrawals were due to a lack of clear goals and an inability to see relevance of a college education as to what students perceived as being the "real world." Students of low educational aspiration were more

likely to withdraw than those of high aspiration, which suggested that withdrawal from college may be a problem of motivation. This finding supported earlier studies.

College environment. A student's college experience seemed to be an important factor in the withdrawal process after controlling for student background characteristics. Relatively more students who withdrew than those who persisted, reported dissatisfaction with the quality of faculty and in their own intellectual development. At four-year institutions, there was a clear relationship between the degree of satisfaction with the campus social life and withdrawals. This finding seemed to support the speculation made by other researchers, Tinto (1975) in particular, that withdrawal behavior is influenced by the degree of integration into the social and academic systems of an institution. The NCES study concluded that:

In general, college withdrawal is a simple function of the main effects of multiple variables. This finding certainly helps to simplify the conceptualization of the withdrawal process. . . . Withdrawal behavior can be viewed as a result of cumulative effects of many individual variables. . . . What is needed is more knowledge about effective intervention techniques designed to facilitate appropriate behavior--whether it be entering, completing, or leaving college. (p. 141)

Comprehensive Reviews of Literature

Two major comprehensive literature reviews on college withdrawal studies were done by Cope and Hannah (1975) and Pantages and Creedon (1978). The Pantages and Creedon study completed in 1978, covered a twenty-five year span, 1950 to 1975.

The major findings from the literature review completed by Cope and Hannah showed:

- The withdrawal rate had not changed much over the past fifty years. Research has shown that approximately 30 to 40 percent of the students who entered college earned baccalaureate degrees in four years; 20 to 30 percent graduated later; and the remaining 30 to 40 percent never earned degrees.
- There was little withdrawal from college among the most promising entrants, at least in terms of number of degrees earned.
- Men and women discontinued, stopped out, and transferred, in approximately equal proportions but for different reasons. Men withdrew more often because of matters related to competence, adequacy, and identity searching; women withdrew more often because of intellectual, aesthetic and social dimensions, which included dating and marriage.
- The primary factor attributed to retention of the student was the student's identification with the college.
- Reasons for discontinuance were complex and overlapping, often having nothing to do with the student, and in some instances may not even have been recognized by the student. Evidence did not show a "dropout personality."
- There were often substantial positive results in withdrawing from college, either on a permanent or temporary basis. Students have been found to do better than they did prior to withdrawal; a growing body of findings suggested that

withdrawing from college was a positive step taken by individuals to constructively re-evaluate important decisions.

Cope and Hannah (1975) concluded that withdrawing from college was not a problem in itself but rather a symptom of other conditions. Colleges may precipitate certain withdrawal behavior because of the stresses of examinations, grades, required credits, deadlines, because of the social demands, and because of the general environmental climates of very different colleges. They further conclude that conditions associated with withdrawal will be alleviated when "students are free to learn in new ways, in different settings, and in varying time periods" (p. 102).

The findings by Pantages and Creedon (1978) on the factors associated with withdrawal from college showed:

Demographic factors. The evidence suggested that age was not a crucial variable. While sex can be a significant factor when other factors (such as scholastic, environmental, institutional, and longitudinal) were considered; it was not significant in overall withdrawal rates. Most SES variables were not significant when a student's GPA was controlled. And while the level of parental education may be the most significant of these variables, it did not appear to be a primary factor in withdrawal.

Academic factors. High school GPA, rank in class, and scholastic aptitude were the single best predictors of attrition. The evidence suggested that these factors could account for half of the variance. While high grades did not guarantee persistence, low first semester college grades were an accurate predictor of attrition.

Motivational factors. Pantages and Creedon believed that research in this area had been hindered by the lack of accurate assessment techniques. They felt that before such factors as motivational level and commitment could be used in predicting withdrawal, better measuring tools were needed. This factor also applied to the impact of "strong" educational and vocational goals. The research suggested that these variables were significant if they were congruent with the orientation of the college. The variables of parental or peer group influence, although relevant, did not appear to be powerful enough to be considered important.

Financial factors. Although students consistently ranked finances as one of the primary reasons for withdrawing, they were not a major reason. The availability of financial aid, particularly in the form of grants or scholarship, appeared to be a significant factor in college persistence; however, its importance appeared to be more of a psychological impact on the student rather than an economic benefit.

College environment. The effects of the college environment on student withdrawals or retention has only been studied during the past fifteen years. Research has shown that college environment produced changes in the students who attended college as well as serving as a selective device before a student enrolled. The "college fit" theory was strongly supported by the evidence presented in the literature. The degree to which a student was likely to continue in college was the degree to which the attitudes and values of the student corresponded with those of the institution.

Reported reasons for withdrawal by students. The most frequently cited reasons given by students for withdrawing from college were: (a) academic concerns, (b) financial difficulties, (c) motivational problems, (d) personal problems, and (e) problems of adjustment to "college life." Less frequently mentioned were marriage, student or family illness and dissatisfaction with college. The general pattern appeared to be that women dropped out mainly for personal reasons and men primarily for curricular reasons.

The withdrawal process. There was general agreement in the literature, that most withdrawals occurred during the first year and before the beginning of the second year in college. The final decision to withdraw was the result of much deliberation over an extended period of time and was not done impulsively.

From their extensive review of the literature, Pantages and Creedon concluded:

Attrition is the result of an extremely intricate interplay among a multitude of variables. As such, attempts to isolate single causal factors or groups of "major" determinants are misguided and ultimately futile for the practical concerns of individual colleges. Those factors which predict a student's chances of persisting at a particular college generally account for half of the variance. Some studies claim more accurate prediction using multiple regression techniques. However, there have not been adequate follow-up studies of their research to verify the initial findings and to determine whether the results are generalizable. Until this is done, we feel that these results may be the exception rather than the rule. (p. 101)

Models of the Withdrawal Process

Several models on the withdrawal process have been developed. They seemed important to include in the literature review because they seek to explain, rather than just describe, the processes that bring individuals to withdraw from institutions of higher education.

Models were developed by Spady (1970), Rootman (1972), and Tinto (1975).

Spady developed an interactional model in which personal attributes such as dispositions, interests and attitudes, interacted with environmental influences and demands, such as courses, faculty members and peers. This interaction provided opportunities for the student to assimilate successfully into the social and academic systems of the college. The student's decision whether to remain in college or to withdraw was heavily influenced by the kinds of rewards found within those systems.

Rootman (1972) also developed an interactional theory which asserted that voluntary withdrawal was related to the "goodness of fit between the individual and the college environment." If the degree of fit was poor, the individual would experience strain and would seek some kind of "coping," mechanism to handle that strain. Withdrawing from college would be the "coping mechanism students used when the strain became too great."

Tinto's model (1975), which is an extension of Spady's, seeks to explain withdrawal from college rather than to withdrawal in the system of higher educational institutions. It can be viewed as:

. . . a longitudinal process of interactions between the individual and the academic and social systems of the college during which a person's experiences in these systems (as measured by his normative and structural integration), continually modify his goals and institutional commitments in ways which lead to persistence and/or to varying forms of dropout. (p. 94)

All three of these models place their focus on person-institution interactions. They hold that a student is more likely to remain in college, if the integration of that student into the institutional environment is successful, either academically or socially.

Intervention Techniques

A number of withdrawal studies reviewed by this writer, recommended intervention techniques which may assist in lowering student withdrawals at institutions of higher education.

Astin, in Preventing Students from Dropping Out, (1975) recommended that administrators focus their attention on student involvement in the institution as a means of influencing chances of students completing their college degrees. He based his recommendation on the fact that the most frequently given reason for withdrawing from college was "boredom with courses," and while, he stated, it may be a socially acceptable "rationalization," it was reflective of non-involvement. This factor was consistent with other evidence which revealed that lack of involvement was a critical element in the decision by the student to withdraw. He suggested that institutions of higher education undertake studies of the reasons for student boredom.

Astin also suggested that academic support systems, orientation programs, counseling and guidance programs, financial aid, increased

extracurricular opportunities and on-campus housing, particularly for the freshman year, might be useful intervention strategies.

Academic support systems. Since a student's GPA was shown to have a stronger relationship to withdrawal than any other single variable, anything that could be done to enhance the academic performance of a student, will tend to reduce a student's chances of withdrawing. Tutoring, programmed instruction, study skills development courses and self-paced learning were some of the intervention techniques recommended.

Orientation programs. Colleges and universities could consider the development of orientation programs which would familiarize students with research findings on withdrawal behavior. This would allow them to consider factors in their own background and environment which affect their chances of withdrawal. Providing students with such information would better enable them to elect environmental options that would help them to complete college.

Counseling and guidance programs. Colleges and universities could develop programs to help students to become more involved in campus life.

Financial aid. Astin's findings revealed that work-study programs were universally effective in contributing to greater persistence. These positive effects, he believes, might be attributable to the greater degree of student involvement in campus life. Modest support from several sources simultaneously was associated with somewhat reduced chances of persistence, but support from a single source (a loan is the main exception) was generally associated with increased chances of persistence.

To minimize withdrawal potential, Pantages and Creedon (1978), suggested that colleges and universities develop and implement a variety of programs designed to either prevent or intervene at an early state, in the process of withdrawal. The development of such intervention programs should be the responsibility of the entire academic community. Areas which Pantages and Creedon recommended for consideration were:

Admissions. Applicants should be interviewed and their records analyzed for the purpose of determining their potential for persistence as well as their eligibility for admission.

Orientation programs. More comprehensive orientation programs for new students were needed which should include parents and transfer students. It was recommended that these programs be scheduled at critical points throughout the year and focused on those attitudinal and motivational variables found to contribute to withdrawal.

College counseling services. Counseling services need to be better publicized to students, faculty, and parents. Faculty and students need to learn how to identify students in need of counseling. There should be a greater investment of personnel in areas of vocational counseling and job development. Also likely to contribute to student persistence, would be the availability of group and individual counseling on improving study habits. The focus, though not exclusively, should be on freshmen since research has shown that these were the students most likely to withdraw.

Financial aid. Programs should be modified so as to provide grants, even in smaller amounts, to more students.

Other areas for consideration. Greater use of existing college environment assessment techniques should be made. The focus should be in areas that create student dissatisfaction which cause the likelihood of withdrawal from college.

Pantages and Creedon suggest that there should be greater faculty-student interaction, particularly during the first year for freshmen and transfers, as well as greater faculty involvement in orientation programs. Exit interviews for all students who withdraw should be mandatory and a follow-up questionnaire sent to all those who withdrew.

Summary of Traditional Age Student Withdrawals

In general, it can be concluded from the literature review that withdrawal rates from college or university for the typical age undergraduate student have not changed greatly over the years in spite of the fact that it has been considered a problem in higher education and a topic of much research.

It would appear to this writer, from reviewed national studies, comprehensive literature review studies, and conceptual models, that withdrawing from college is an interplay of a number of complex variables upon the life of a student. Strongly supported in the literature is the "college-fit" theory. The closer the values and attitudes of the student correspond with those of the institution the individual attends, the more likely the student will continue.

Effective intervention techniques may assist in lowering the withdrawal rate. Some of the areas to be considered are admissions,

orientation programs, counseling services, study skills programs, student-faculty interactions, and financial aids.

Chapter Summary

This chapter has included reviews of the literature from studies conducted on adult students who withdrew from college and universities, extension courses and adult education courses and also studies completed on traditional age students who withdrew from undergraduate institutions of higher education. In addition, a section of the chapter described intervention techniques which may assist in reducing the number of students who withdraw from institutions of higher education.

From the foregoing literature, it appears to this writer that some common factors do exist which affect both traditional age students and adult students who withdraw. Some of these factors which pertain to both are:

- The literature supports the effects of the college environment on student withdrawals. Studies indicate that students who withdraw report greater dissatisfaction with the quality of instruction and the attitude of instructors.
- There appears to be support for the "college-fit" theory.
- The research reveals that certain withdrawal behaviors may be precipitated by academic institutions because of stress of examinations, grades, social demands, and environmental climate.
- Non-participation is an important variable in withdrawals. For adults, the characteristics of non-participation in the community are the same as those for withdrawal.

- Strongly supported in the literature is the hypothesis that the characteristics associated with withdrawal from college do not operate in isolation but are the result of intricate interplay among a multitude of variables upon the lives of students.

The review also uncovered some unique factors which pertain to adult students. The research shows that family background and family attitude appear to be important variables associated with withdrawal of traditional age students. For adult students, however, the socio-economic status of the parents, the level of parental education, and family attitude appear not to be factors related to withdrawal from institutions of higher education.

Although none of the studies reviewed pertained directly to the research at hand, they were, nevertheless, helpful in providing background data for better understanding the complexity of the factors associated with withdrawal. Moreover, the review of these studies demonstrated to the writer that her area of research was a problem for which no recent major research existed.

It also became evident to the writer as she reviewed the literature, that although the withdrawal of adults from educational activities has long been perceived as a problem, our knowledge as to its causes and possible intervention techniques has been limited. It is, in part, for this reason, that this study was undertaken. It is hoped that this study might provide information which could assist

individuals in colleges and universities to address a concern, and to generate a body of knowledge about withdrawal of adult students from four-year institutions of higher education.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

A description of the population surveyed, the instrument used in data collecting, and procedures followed in collecting and analyzing the data, are included in this chapter.

The Population

The population consisted of all part-time and full-time undergraduate and graduate adult students who were over 25 years of age and who had voluntarily dropped all of their courses at Michigan State University.

The frequency of the total number of students enrolled at Michigan State University, the number of traditional age and adult students, and the number of men and women in each category are presented in Table 1.

The Sample

The researcher decided to sample approximately 150 students for her study from all adult students who withdrew during fall term 1979. The selection of 150 adult students as the sample for this study was based on data obtained by this researcher during the academic year 1976-77 which suggested that a sample of this size was available at Michigan State University.

Table 1. Frequency of Total Students Enrolled, Divided into Traditional Age and Adult Students, and Further Divided by Male and Female Students, Fall Term 1979

Student Population	Number Enrolled ^a	Number Withdrawing
Total student enrollment	44,756 (100.00%)	556 (1.24%)

Traditional age students of total student enrollment	37,099 (83.16%)	382 (68.71%)
Traditional age male students	18,849 (50.81%)	205 (53.66%)
Traditional age female students	18,250 (49.19%)	177 (46.34%)

Adult students of total student sample	7,547 (16.84%)	174 (31.29%)
Adult male students	4,311 (57.20%)	95 (54.60%)
Adult female students	3,226 (42.80%)	79 (45.40%)

^a A total of 110 students could not be classified by age and are omitted from totals.

The frequency of total number of students withdrawn from Michigan State University during the 1976-77 academic year is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Frequency of Withdrawal of Students at Michigan State University During the 1976-77 Academic Year

Students Withdrawing	Term		
	Fall '76	Winter '77	Spring '77
Total number	583	548	499
Number of adult students	161 (27.62%)	161 (29.38%)	157 (31.46%)
Number of adult male students	84 (52.17%)	86 (53.42%)	90 (57.32%)
Number of adult female students	77 (47.83%)	75 (46.58%)	67 (42.68%)

Note: Percentage of adult male and female students withdrawing is based on number of adult students withdrawing.

The total number of adult students obtained for this study was, in fact, only 135. Based on her professional experience for eight years as Director of Student Withdrawals at Michigan State University, the researcher felt that these students in the sample did not differ from other adult students over 25 years of age who withdrew during prior terms at Michigan State University. Their concerns appeared to be very much the same as past students. Moreover, this sample was perceived as sufficiently large to use inferential statistical

techniques so as to adequately generalize results to the population of university students over 25 years of age. This proved to be the case as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 3. Frequency and Percentage of Total Number of Adult Students Enrolled, Total Number Withdrawing, and Number of Students in Sample by Sex, Fall Term 1979

Student Sample	Total Number Enrolled	Total Number Withdrawing	Sample Number Withdrawing
Total adult students	7,547	174	135
Male students	4,311 (57.20%)	95 (54.60%)	74 (54.81%)
Female students	3,226 (42.80%)	79 (45.40%)	61 (45.19%)

Methodology

During fall term 1979, all adult students who voluntarily withdrew at the Student Withdrawal Office were handed questionnaires to complete in addition to the "Withdrawal Application" and "Information Sheet" normally given to them. A questionnaire was also mailed to adult students who requested to be withdrawn through correspondence, and to those adult students whose names appeared on a list supplied by the Registrar's Office as having dropped all of their courses during the university's "drop" period. There are a few students each term who are unaware of the withdrawal procedure and, instead of withdrawing, will

obtain "drop" cards from their academic departments to turn into the Registrar's Office. This occurs primarily among students enrolled for only one course who don't associate dropping their only course as a withdrawal from the university. It was from the above three sources that the student sample for this study was selected.

In addition to adult students completing a questionnaire as a part of the withdrawal process, it was determined by the doctoral committee, that the researcher would see and conduct an interview with approximately every fourth adult student who withdrew. Because it would not be feasible to interview all of the adult students, this smaller interview sample was chosen. It was felt that an interview sample of approximately 20 to 30 students would be adequate to establish any pattern of response. If the researcher were not in the office at the time the fourth student appeared, she would conduct the interview with the next adult student who withdrew. During fall term 1979, 116 adult students withdrew at the Student Withdrawal Office, and of this number 23 were interviewed by the researcher.

The purpose of the interview was to supplement the information derived from the questionnaire. It would permit the respondent to amplify and qualify his/her responses and would allow the researcher to ask follow-up questions where appropriate.

Kerlinger (1964) substantiates the utilization of the interview for this purpose. He recommends the interview to "supplement other methods used in a research study: to follow up unexpected results, to validate other methods, and to go deeper into the motivations of respondents and their reasons for responding as they do" (p. 468).

Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was examined and selected as a model for the questionnaire used in this study (see Appendix F). It was part of a manual developed by NCHEMS Information About Students (AS) project, in which one of the primary goals was to develop and pilot-test a questionnaire which would help colleges and universities understand and explain the withdrawal of students from their institutions.

The procedures and materials in the manual were pilot tested during 1975 in four diverse post-secondary education institutions: The University of Colorado, Arapahoe Community College, Windham College, and The University of Southern Colorado. During the year of pilot testing, four successful withdrawal studies were completed at those institutions. NCHEMS developed a manual guide in 1978 which was based on that year of pilot testing the questionnaire and successful completion of the four withdrawal studies.

The NCHEMS questionnaire was developed primarily to survey former students who had already left college without completing their academic program. Some modifications to the NCHEMS questionnaire were, therefore, necessary to adapt it to a study of the within term withdrawal of adult students. These modifications were based on information derived from the literature reviewed, suggestions made by the faculty of the Department of Higher Education and the Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University, and from information gathered during exit interviews with students who voluntarily

withdrew during this researcher's eight years of work in the Office of Student Withdrawals at Michigan State University. (See Appendix A for the questionnaire utilized in this study.)

The first fifteen items on the questionnaire covered demographic and academic background information of the student respondents: age, marital status, age when first entered college, current educational level, attendance pattern in higher education institutions, academic major, curriculum, student status, financial aid information, employment status, GPA, and probation status. Modifications made to this portion of the questionnaire included:

- The addition of "widowed" under "Marital Status" (question 3).
- A question added (question 5), on the age of the adult when he/she first entered college.
- The addition of "2nd B.A." under "Current Educational Level" (question 6).
- A question added (question 7), about information on the adults' pattern of attendance throughout their college experiences.

The inclusion of the above categories in the questionnaire was done as an attempt to more clearly define the population at hand; and to establish the educational patterns of adult students enrolled at Michigan State University in comparison to information derived from the literature reviewed. The responses to question 7, "Pattern of Attendance," proved ambiguous and were not analyzed in the research.

The remainder of the questionnaire was divided into four general categories--the initial category being a modification of the NCHEMS instrument:

1. Reasons for Entering and Re-entering College.

From the fourteen response options listed, students were asked to check all which applied to them when they initially entered college and, if applicable, when they re-entered college. These response options were selected from the researcher's experience in working with adult college students, from suggestions of professors and committee members, and from the literature based on the needs of the adult learner.

2. Reasons for Withdrawing from Michigan State University.

Thirty-three response options were listed under four sub-categories: academic, employment, financial, and personal circumstances. The following scale and arbitrary numerical weightings were used:

Major reason	= 1
Moderate reason	= 2
Minor reason	= 3
Not a reason	= 4

Modifications made to the NCHEMS instrument were:

a. Under "Academic," added:

Lack of Interest (Option 10)
Fear of Ability to Do Well in College (Option 12)

b. Under "Personal Circumstances," added:

Illness of Family (Option 24)
Lack of Encouragement from Spouse (Option 30)
Lack of Encouragement from Family (Option 31)
Lack of Encouragement from Friends (Option 32)
Death of Family Member (Option 33).

One particularly important response option which was added at the end of these listed reasons for withdrawing was the

inclusion of space to allow students the opportunity to elaborate on their individual situation and to not be limited by the conditions which were listed. This option was believed to be of particular significance because these responses might lead to factors which were specifically unique to adult students which previous research had not considered, and it could also aid in the development of recommendations for possible retention strategies.

3. Degree of Satisfaction with Varying Aspects of the Michigan State University Community.

Students were asked to rate thirty-one response options using the following scale and arbitrary numerical weightings:

Much	= 1
Moderate	= 2
Little	= 3
None	= 4
Does not apply	= 5

Modifications of the NCHEMS questionnaire included in the above subcategory which the adult students were asked to rate were:

- 26. Opportunity to interact with own peer group.
- 27. Attitude of faculty toward me as a student.
- 28. Attitude of my advisor.
- 29. Attitude of administrative staff.
- 30. Attitude of clerical staff.
- 31. Quality of faculty.

These additional items were selected primarily on the basis of what the literature and other studies have reported as problems which many adult learners have encountered when they return to college.

4. Future Plans.

This portion of the NCHEMS instrument was left in tact.

Students were asked to check any of the eight response options listed which applied to them.

Following construction of the questionnaire, it was pilot tested during the 1979 summer term at Michigan State University. Twelve adult students over age 25, who came to voluntarily withdraw at the Withdrawal Office, were given the questionnaire to complete. The researcher briefly discussed the purpose of the study with each one. After completing the instrument, each student was interviewed concerning the clarity of the items and instructions on the questionnaire. The students reported that the questionnaire was clear and made no suggestions for improvement. On the basis of this pilot study, and those completed by NCHEMS, face validity was claimed for the instrument.

Conducting the Interview

An interview guide was developed in order to assure that the same topics would be covered in each interview and to minimize any unintended bias on the part of the researcher (see Appendix E).

General areas covered were:

1. Educational and employment background information of parents, siblings, and spouse.
2. Reasons for withdrawing from the university. This question was asked again even though it appeared in the questionnaire in order to allow students to state their reasons for

withdrawing in their own words, and to give them an opportunity to discuss their own situation face to face.

3. When the decision to withdraw was made. Was it done spontaneously, or did the process cover a span of time?
4. Steps which the student might have taken to avoid the need to withdraw.
5. Any intervention strategies which the university might have taken which then would have allowed the student to complete the term.

The interview guide served as a directional device rather than as a detailed questionnaire. Although each student interviewed was asked the same specific questions, a great deal of latitude was permitted for the student to elaborate on his/her particular situation.

Each interview guide was numerically coded to correspond to the questionnaire which had been completed by the student.

The interviews were conducted in the privacy of the researcher's office in the Student Services Building at Michigan State University. Initial introductory remarks were made to allow time for at least minimal rapport to develop between the researcher and the adult student. The introductory remarks covered the following points:

- The purpose for the interview.
- How the adult student happened to be selected.
- The confidential aspect of the interview.
- An outline of the general questions to be asked.

The researcher attempted to establish a warm, accepting, and informal atmosphere. She indicated to each respondent that his/her answers were important and were a valuable contribution to the research at hand. Upon conclusion of the interview, each was thanked for his/her participation.

Although a standard format was followed in all the interviews, the length varied according to the flow of conversation and the ease with which the student responded to the questions asked. Generally each interview took approximately fifteen to thirty minutes. The researcher felt that the time allowed was sufficient to supplement the information derived from the questionnaire.

Collection of the Data

Beginning September 17, 1979, the first day of fall term registration, all registered students who withdrew at the Office of Student Withdrawals, were given a numerically coded questionnaire with an accompanying cover letter. All students, regardless of age, were given questionnaires to complete in order to simplify office procedures. Completed questionnaires were checked and separated by birth date.

Students who had requested to be withdrawn by mail and the students over 25 years of age whose names appeared on the Registrar's list, as having dropped all of their courses, were sent, by U.S. Mail, numerically coded questionnaires, an accompanying letter and a stamped, self-addressed return envelope. No questionnaires were distributed to students after November 9, 1979. Within this time period, 174 adult students were given or mailed questionnaires to complete, and 135 adult

students responded (see Table 4). All 135 questionnaires were used in the data analysis.

Table 4. Questionnaire Distribution to Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979

Total Adult Students Withdrawing	Number of Questionnaires Distributed	Number of Questionnaires Returned	Percent of Return
174	174	135	77.5

Treatment and Analysis of the Data

The data from the questionnaires were coded and key punched onto standard 80 column computer data cards. Data analysis techniques were performed on the Michigan State University Cyber 750 Computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (Nie, Hall, Jenkins, Steinbrenner, & Bent, 1975).

Descriptive data (frequencies and percentage frequencies) were compiled on all questionnaire items using subprogram frequencies. The data were cross partitioned by the independent variables of sex, age group, children, and marital status, which the literature review showed had been used in other studies on student withdrawals. Consequently, it was deemed that these same variables be included in this researcher's study. Only these four independent variables were used, however, because of the lack of variability in other potential variables (see questionnaire, Appendix A).

1. Sex--male and female.
2. Age--The sample of adult students ranged in age from 26 years through 58 years. The sample, because of the wide variance in age, was first divided into five groups: 26-30 years; 31-35 years; 36-40 years; 41-45 years; and 46+ years. However, after examining the total population of the study and noting the small adult sample in a number of the age group cells, it was determined that in order to provide any meaningful analysis, it would be necessary to collapse the population into two groups--those in the 26-30 age range, and the remainder of the adult population in the 31+ age range.
3. Marital Status--Since there were no widowed adult students in the population, only the variables of married, single, and divorced were used.
4. Children--Yes or no. This variable was not used in the data analysis because ten individuals did not respond to the question as to whether or not they had children; and by reducing this number, it would automatically eliminate ten adult students from any analysis of the independent variables.

The Chi-square Test was utilized in analyzing the data to determine any statistical significance between the independent demographic variables (age group, sex, marital status, and children), and the dependent variables listed under reasons for withdrawing and degree of satisfaction. Because of the relatively small number of students in some sample cells and because of the way the responses were distributed,

only the main effects of the four independent variables were tested. The researcher was unable to look at the interaction effects between the variables without breaking the underlying assumption of the Chi-square Test which states that "in general, no theoretical frequency should be smaller than 5" (Isaac & Michael, 1979, p. 135). For all testing the .05 level of significance was adopted as a criterion.

Summary

The population for this study consisted of full and part-time, graduate and undergraduate adult students over 25 years of age, who voluntarily withdrew from Michigan State University within the first eight weeks of fall term, 1979.

Students who came to the Office of Student Withdrawals, were asked to complete a questionnaire which was developed using the NCHEMS questionnaire as a model. Questionnaires were also sent to all adult students who withdrew by correspondence. The questionnaire items covered demographic and academic data, reasons for entering and re-entering college, reasons for withdrawing from college, degree of satisfaction with varying aspects of the campus community, and plans for the future. In addition, the researcher interviewed a proportionate number of adult students who withdrew. The purpose for the interview was to supplement the information derived from the questionnaire.

Descriptive data were compiled on all items using the SPSS program and processed by the Cyber 750 computer. The Chi-square Test

of Independence was used to analyze data to determine any statistical relationships between the demographic variables and variables listed under reasons for withdrawing and degree of satisfaction. For all tests the .05 level of significance was adopted.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Introduction

This study was designed to: (1) describe the adult student population who voluntarily withdrew from Michigan State University during fall term, 1979, giving particular attention to the students' reasons for withdrawal and their degree of satisfaction with varying aspects of the university community; (2) analyze the factors which contributed to their decision to withdraw and compare these factors by independent variables, in an attempt to ascertain which of these factors, if any, were university related; and (3) discuss possible intervention strategies which the university might take to retain a higher percentage of the adult student body.

This chapter will be devoted to the analysis of data related to the first two objectives. The third objective will be discussed in Chapter V.

A description of the adult students in the sample in terms of various demographic variables, will be discussed in the first part of the chapter. The latter part will be devoted to an analysis of reasons adult students withdraw and their degree of satisfaction by the four independent variables (sex, age group, marital status, and children).

Demographic Variables of Adult Students

Sex, Age Group, Marital Status, and Children

The total number of adult students in this study was divided by sex, by two age groups (26-30 years and 31+ years), by marital status (married, single, divorced), and by whether or not there were children. The results are shown in Table 5. As can be seen, on closer examination, more of the adult students were married, and there were more married men than married women. There were also more divorced women than divorced men. Single students were almost equally divided by sex.

As can be noted, there were approximately an equal number of married adults who did and did not have children as is also the case with divorced adults. Only one single adult reported having children.

Further examination revealed that the women in the 26-30 year age group were almost equally divided as to whether they did or did not have children, whereas almost all of the women over 30 years, reported having children. When married and divorced women were grouped together, only nine of the women in the 26-30 year age group had children; fourteen did not. Of the women in the 31+ year age group, 16 had children and four did not.

It should also be noted that ten of the adults did not respond to the question regarding children; therefore, they were eliminated from Table 5. Because of this decrease (7.4%) in the total number of adults available for descriptive purposes, children/no children, was not used as an independent variable in the first part of this chapter.

Table 5. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979 by Children, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Children					
<u>Married:</u>					
Children	11	12	7	10	40
No children	14	12	10	1	37
<u>Single:</u>					
Children	1	--	--	--	1
No children	9	4	12	3	28
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Children	--	3	2	6	11
No children	1	--	4	3	8
Total	36	31	35	23	125

Note: A total of ten students failed to respond to child/no child variables (seven males; three females).

Academic Degree

The next variable examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status, was the degree the adult students were working toward. The results are shown in Table 6. The majority of adult students who withdrew were working toward either their bachelor's (n = 45) or master's degree (n = 35). Twenty-five married, four single, and nine divorced adult students reported that they were currently working toward their bachelor's, and twenty-four married, seven single, and four divorced adult students reported current work toward their master's degree. Also, sixteen married adult students were currently enrolled as "Special Students" (Guest, Unclassified, Lifelong Education).

College and Major

Because of the diversity of majors and colleges reported, these demographic variables were not divided further by the independent variables of age group and marital status. The results are reported in Table 7.

As illustrated in Table 7, the largest number of adult students who withdrew were enrolled in the colleges of Social Science (n = 28) and Education (n = 25). While men (n = 15) and women (n = 13) were almost equally divided in the College of Social Science, there were more women (n = 15) than men (n = 10) enrolled in the College of Education. There were no adult students enrolled in the Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine and James Madison College who withdrew.

Table 6. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term, 1979, by Academic Degree, By Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
<u>Married:</u>					
B.A.	9	9	4	3	25
Second B.A.	1	--	2	1	4
M.A.	10	5	5	4	24
Ph.D.	4	5	1	1	11
Professional	--	--	--	--	--
Special	2	6	5	3	16
<u>Single:</u>					
B.A.	4	1	4	2	11
Second B.A.	2	1	1	1	5
M.A.	1	2	4	--	7
Ph.D.	1	1	1	--	3
Professional	--	--	1	--	1
Special	2	1	1	1	5
<u>Divorced:</u>					
B.A.	2	1	2	4	9
Second B.A.	--	--	2	2	4
M.A.	--	--	2	2	4
Ph.D.	--	--	--	--	--
Professional	1	--	--	--	1
Special	--	2	--	2	4
Total	39	34	35	26	134

Note: One adult male student failed to respond to marital status, therefore, N = 134.

Table 7. Frequency of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by College and Major, and by Sex

College Major	Sex		Total (N = 135)
	Men (N = 74)	Women (N = 61)	
<u>Agriculture & Nat. Resources:</u>			
No Preference	--	2	2
Agricultural Economics	1	--	1
Food Systems Management	--	2	2
Public Affairs Management	--	1	1
Agricultural Technology	2	--	2
Animal Husbandry	1	--	1
Horticulture	1	--	1
Parks & Recreation	1	--	1
Total	<u>6</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>11</u>
<u>Arts & Letters:</u>			
Special Program	--	1	1
Studio Art	1	2	3
Applied Music	1	--	1
English	2	--	2
Humanities	1	--	1
Total	<u>5</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>8</u>
<u>Business:</u>			
General Business Admin.	2	--	2
Accounting	3	--	3
Financial Administration	2	--	2
HRI	--	1	1
Office Administration	--	1	1
Total	<u>7</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>9</u>
<u>Communication:</u>			
Journalism	--	1	1
Advertising	1	--	1
Telecommunications	2	--	2
Communications	--	1	1
Total	<u>3</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Education:</u>			
Special Programs	4	6	10
Social Foundations	--	1	1
Educational Psychology	1	--	1
Elementary Education	--	4	4
Educational Admin.	2	--	2
Reading Instruction	--	1	1
Curriculum Instruction	1	1	2
Eval. & Research Design	1	--	1
Industrial Education	1	--	1

Table 7--Continued

College	Sex		Total (N = 135)
	Men (N = 74)	Women (N = 61)	
Major			
<u>Education--Continued:</u>			
Health & Physical Ed.	--	1	1
Health Education	--	1	1
Total	10	15	25
<u>Engineering:</u>			
No Preference	1	--	1
Civil Engineering	1	1	2
Electrical Engineering	1	--	1
Mechanical Engineering	2	1	3
Total	5	2	7
<u>Human Ecology:</u>			
Special Program	--	1	1
Consumer Community Serv.	--	1	1
Family Studies	--	1	1
Dietetics	1	--	1
Nutrition	2	--	2
Total	3	3	6
<u>Human Medicine:</u>			
Professional Program	1	--	1
Pathology	1	--	1
Medical Technology	--	2	2
Total	2	2	4
<u>James Madison:</u>			
	--	--	--
<u>Lyman Briggs:</u>			
No Preference	--	1	1
Computer Science	1	--	1
Total	1	1	2
<u>Natural Science:</u>			
Special Program	2	1	3
Biological Science	1	3	4
Biochemistry	1	--	1
Zoology	1	1	2
Geology	1	--	1
Physics	3	1	4
Total	9	6	15
<u>Osteopathic Medicine:</u>			
	--	--	--

Table 7--Continued

College Major	Sex		Total (N = 135)
	Men (N = 74)	Women (N = 61)	
<u>Social Science:</u>			
Special Program	1	--	1
Labor & Indus. Relations	2	2	4
Criminal Justice	3	2	5
Landscape Architecture	--	1	1
Urban Planning	1	--	1
Social Science	2	2	4
Anthropology	--	1	1
Social Work	2	2	4
Psychology	2	2	4
Sociology	1	1	2
Total	15	13	28
<u>University College:</u>			
No Preference	2	1	3
<u>Urban Development:</u>			
Racial & Ethnic Studies	--	1	1
<u>Veterinary Medicine:</u>			
Undergraduate Program	--	1	1
Ph.D. Program	1	--	1
Total	1	1	2
<u>Justin Morrill:</u>			
No Preference	2	--	2
<u>Lifelong Education:</u>			
	3	4	7
Grand Total	74	61	135

Full/Part-Time Enrollment

Students were asked to indicate whether they were enrolled on a full-time basis, a part-time basis, or both, during the last three terms or less that they have been enrolled. This variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. As illustrated in Table 8, the majority of adult students ($n = 85$) who withdrew fall term 1979, were enrolled on a part-time basis.

It can be noted on closer examination that there is a major difference in withdrawal behavior for the total number of married and divorced adults enrolled part-time ($n = 67$) when compared to the total number of married and divorced adult students enrolled full-time ($n = 27$).

This difference is not evident for single adult students. They were more equally divided as to whether they were enrolled full-time or part-time. Eighteen single adult students indicated part-time enrollment and twelve reported full-time enrollment.

Financial Aid

Whether adult students were or were not receiving financial aid was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The results, shown in Table 9, reveal that the majority of adult students that withdrew did not receive financial aid. One hundred-two students reported no aid received and only thirty-two indicated they were financial aid recipients.

The financial aid recipient variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The results are shown in Table 10.

Table 8. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Enrollment Status, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

		Sex				
Marital Status		Male		Female		
Enrollment Status		26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	Total
<u>Married:</u>						
Full-time		9	5	4	2	20
Part-time		15	18	8	10	51
Both		2	2	3	--	7
<u>Single:</u>						
Full-time		4	--	8	--	12
Part-time		6	6	3	3	18
Both		--	--	1	--	1
<u>Divorced:</u>						
Full-time		1	1	1	1	4
Part-time		1	1	5	9	16
Both		<u>1</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>1</u>
Total		39	33	33	25	130

Note: A total of four adult students failed to respond to full/part/both enrollment status: two married females, one single female, and one divorced male.

Table 9. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew, by Financial Aid Recipients, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Financial Aid					
<u>Married:</u>					
Yes	6	6	3	1	16
No	20	19	14	11	64
<u>Single:</u>					
Yes	4	--	4	1	9
No	6	6	8	3	23
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Yes	2	2	2	1	7
No	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	39	34	35	26	134

Note: One adult male student failed to respond to marital status, therefore N = 134.

Table 10. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew, by Type of Financial Aid, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Sex					
Marital Status	Male		Female		
Type of Financial Aid Received	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	Total
<u>Married:</u>					
Scholarship	--	1	1	--	2
Grant	1	1	1	--	3
VA Assistance	4	4	1	--	9
Loan	2	1	--	1	4
Work Study	1	--	--	--	1
Other	1	1	--	--	2
<u>Single:</u>					
Scholarship	--	--	--	1	1
Grant	1	--	3	--	4
VA Assistance	2	--	--	--	2
Loan	2	--	--	--	2
Work Study	--	--	--	--	--
Other	1	--	1	--	2
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Scholarship	1	--	--	--	1
Grant	--	--	2	1	3
VA Assistance	--	1	--	--	1
Loan	2	--	--	--	2
Work Study	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	--	--	--

Note: Adult students could indicate all financial aid which was applicable, therefore they have given more than one answer.

Men reported receiving financial aid from VA Assistance (n = 11) and loans (n = 7), while women reported receiving financial aid through grants (n = 6). The data also suggest that a greater number of men are financial aid recipients than are women.

It should be noted that students were asked to indicate as many kinds of financial aid as was applicable.

Other Means of Educational Support

For those adult students not receiving financial aid, the method of educational support was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The results in Table 11 indicate that the majority of adult students reported employment as the major source of educational support (n = 57). Other varying means of educational support were reported by twenty-four adult students.

Employment

The employment variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. As illustrated in Table 12, the data indicate that the majority of men and women (n = 110) reported that they were employed while enrolled as students fall term 1979. Only twenty-three adult students reported no employment.

As the data in Table 13 indicate, the majority of adult students who worked, reported being employed 36+ hours a week (n = 75). Five adults failed to indicate the number of hours employed per week.

Table 11. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Other Means of Educational Support, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

		Sex				
Marital Status		Male		Female		
Other Means of Educational Support		26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	Total
<u>Married:</u>						
Employment		11	11	6	4	32
Personal income		1	3	1	2	7
Tuition reimbursement		--	--	--	2	2
Husband		--	--	1	2	3
Parents		--	--	--	--	--
Savings		1	--	--	--	1
Husband & employment		--	--	1	--	1
Parents & employment		1	--	1	--	2
<u>Single:</u>						
Employment		4	4	5	2	15
Personal income		1	--	1	--	2
Savings		1	--	--	--	1
Parents & employment		--	1	1	--	2
Parents		--	--	--	1	1
<u>Divorced:</u>						
Employment		1	1	2	6	10
Parents & employment		--	--	1	--	1
Parents & ADC		--	--	1	--	1

Note: Twenty-one students failed to indicate how education was supported, therefore N = 81.

Table 12. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Employment Status, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

		Sex				
Marital Status		Male		Female		
Employment Status		26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	Total
<u>Married:</u>						
Yes		21	21	12	10	64
No		4	4	5	2	15
<u>Single:</u>						
Yes		8	6	11	3	28
No		2	--	1	1	4
<u>Divorced:</u>						
Yes		2	1	5	10	18
No		<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>--</u>	<u>4</u>
Total		38	34	35	26	133

Note: One married male failed to respond whether employed, and one adult student failed to respond to marital status, therefore N = 133.

Table 13. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Number of Hours Employed a Week, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
<u>Married:</u>					
1-10 hours	--	1	--	2	3
11-20 hours	2	--	3	1	6
21-35 hours	--	3	3	1	7
36+ hours	18	16	5	6	45
<u>Single:</u>					
1-10 hours	--	--	1	--	1
11-20 hours	1	--	2	--	3
21-35 hours	2	--	3	1	6
36+ hours	5	5	4	2	16
<u>Divorced:</u>					
1-10 hours	--	--	--	--	--
11-20 hours	--	--	--	--	--
21-35 hours	1	--	2	1	4
36+ hours	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>14</u>
Total	30	26	26	23	105

Note: One adult male student failed to respond to marital status. Five adult students failed to indicate the number of hours employed.

GPA

The GPA variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The data presented in Table 14 indicate that the majority of the adult students reported grade point averages above 2.51. A total of eighty-seven adult students indicated a GPA of 2.51 or better, fourteen reported 2.0-2.5 GPA, and nine reported a GPA of below 2.0. There were twenty-four adult students who reported no GPA earned at Michigan State University.

Academic Probation

The students were asked if they had ever been on academic probation. This variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. As illustrated in Table 15, the majority of the adult students (n = 109) reported that they had never been on academic probation. It should be noted that more single students report prior probationary status than do married or divorced adult students.

Students were then asked if they were currently on academic probation. As the data in Table 16 indicate, the majority of married, single, and divorced students in both age groups (n = 124), reported they were not currently on academic probation. Only nine students reported current probationary status.

Age Initially Enrolled in College

Adult students were asked to indicate their age when they first enrolled in a college or university. This variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The data in Table 17 indicate that

Table 14. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by GPA, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
<u>Married:</u>					
Below 1.0	--	--	--	1	1
1.0 -1.5	1	--	--	--	1
1.51-1.99	--	1	--	--	1
2.0 -2.5	5	3	--	--	8
2.51-2.99	4	2	4	3	13
3.0 -3.5	7	8	4	3	22
3.51-4.0	5	6	5	4	20
No GPA	4	5	4	1	14
<u>Single:</u>					
Below 1.0	1	--	--	--	1
1.0 -1.5	1	--	--	--	1
1.51-1.99	1	--	2	--	3
2.0 -2.5	--	--	2	--	2
2.51-2.99	--	1	2	1	4
3.0 -3.5	1	2	4	--	7
3.51-4.0	3	2	--	--	5
No GPA	3	1	2	3	9
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Below 1.0	--	--	--	--	--
1.0 -1.5	--	--	--	--	--
1.51-1.99	--	--	--	1	1
2.0 -2.5	1	1	--	2	4
2.51-2.99	--	1	3	1	5
3.0 -3.5	2	1	2	2	7
3.51-4.0	--	--	1	3	4
No GPA	--	--	--	1	1
Total	39	34	35	26	134

Note: One adult male student failed to respond to marital status, therefore N = 134.

Table 15. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Prior Academic Probation, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Prior Academic Probation					
<u>Married:</u>					
Yes	6	3	--	1	9
No	20	22	17	11	70
<u>Single:</u>					
Yes	2	2	5	1	10
No	8	4	7	3	22
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Yes	--	2	1	2	5
No	<u>3</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>17</u>
Total	39	34	35	26	134

Note: One adult male student failed to respond to marital status, therefore N = 134.

Table 16. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, Who Are Currently on Academic Probation, by Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Currently on Academic Probation					
<u>Married:</u>					
Yes	2	2	--	1	5
No	23	23	17	11	74
<u>Single:</u>					
Yes	2	--	1	--	3
No	8	6	11	4	29
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Yes	--	--	--	1	1
No	<u>3</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>21</u>
Total	38	34	35	26	133

Note: One adult male student failed to respond to marital status, therefore N=133. One married male failed to indicate if currently on probation.

Table 17. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Age Initially Enrolled in College, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Age Initially Enrolled in College					
<u>Married:</u>					
16-19 years	16	16	15	9	56
20-24 years	7	6	2	--	15
25-29 years	2	2	--	1	5
30+ years	--	--	--	1	1
<u>Single:</u>					
16-19 years	9	5	9	3	26
20-24 years	--	--	3	1	4
25-29 years	1	--	--	--	1
30+ years	--	1	--	--	1
<u>Divorced:</u>					
16-19 years	1	3	5	8	17
20-24 years	2	--	--	--	2
25-29 years	--	--	--	--	--
30+ years	--	--	--	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	38	33	34	25	130

Note: Four adult students failed to respond to the age-start variable, therefore N = 130 (married female, one divorced female and two married males).

the majority of adult students ($n = 99$) reported first entering college between the ages of 16-19 years. It is interesting to note that a number of married men not only entered college between 16-19 years of age, but also entered between the ages of 20-24 years ($n = 13$).

Reasons for Entering College

The next variable examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status, was the reasons adult students entered college. Students were asked to select as many of the fourteen stated reasons listed on the questionnaire that were applicable. Table 18 shows that the three most numerous reasons for entering college reported by married, single, and divorced adult students were: (1) Desire to achieve a degree ($n = 94$); (2) Prepare for a job ($n = 62$); and (3) Intellectual stimulation ($n = 52$). There appears to be no age group or sex differences in these three reasons for entering college. Married and single men and women listed as fourth most numerous reason "To improve my earning potential," while divorced students listed "Pressure from parents." This latter response was reported only by divorced women ($n = 4$).

Students were then asked to choose which was their primary reason for entering college from the reasons they had indicated. This variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The results are reported in Table 19. The primary reason consistently reported by both married and single adult students was, "Desire to achieve a degree" and second, "Prepare for a job." Divorced students, however, selected "Prepare for a job" as their primary choice and "Desire to achieve a degree" as their secondary choice.

Table 18. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Reason for Entering College, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Reasons for Entering College					
<u>Married:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	16	16	15	7	54
Job upgrading	7	6	1	4	18
Prepare for a job	6	10	7	9	32
To resume an interrupted college career	3	3	--	2	8
Prepare for a career change	4	2	1	1	8
To meet new people	2	1	4	1	8
To supplement family income	1	--	--	--	1
For intellectual stimulation	6	10	7	6	29
To improve earning potential	10	4	3	5	22
Pressure from peers	3	3	--	1	7
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	1	1
Pressure from parents	4	1	2	1	8
No specific reason	1	2	--	--	3
Other	2	2	--	1	5
<u>Single:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	8	3	11	4	26
Job upgrading	2	2	--	--	4
Prepare for a job	7	2	6	3	18
Resume an interrupted college career	--	1	--	--	1
To meet new people	3	--	3	--	6
To supplement family income	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	6	3	5	1	15
To improve my earning potential	4	1	4	--	9
Pressure from peers	1	1	1	--	3
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	3	1	3	--	7
No specific reason	1	--	--	1	2
Other	1	--	1	1	3
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	2	2	2	8	14
Job upgrading	--	1	1	1	3
Prepare for a job	1	1	5	5	12
To resume an interrupted career change	--	--	1	1	2
To meet new people	--	--	--	--	--
To supplement family income	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	1	--	2	5	8
To improve my earning potential	--	--	--	1	1
Pressure from peers	--	--	--	1	1
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	1	3	4
No specific reason	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	1	1	--	2

Note: Adult students could indicate as many reasons as were applicable.

Table 19. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Primary Reason for Entering College, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Primary Reason for Entering College					
Married:					
Desire to achieve a degree	11	13	10	2	36
Job upgrading	1	--	--	--	1
Prepare for a job	3	4	4	6	17
To resume an interrupted college career	--	--	--	--	--
Prepare for a career change	1	--	--	--	1
To meet new people	--	--	--	--	--
To supplement family income	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	1	4	2	1	8
To improve my earning potential	2	--	--	--	2
Pressure from peers	2	2	--	--	4
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	--	--	--
No specific reason	--	1	--	--	1
Other	3	1	--	1	5
Single:					
Desire to achieve a degree	2	1	8	3	14
Job upgrading	1	--	--	--	1
Prepare for a job	3	1	3	--	7
To resume an interrupted college career	--	--	--	--	--
Prepare for a career change	--	--	1	--	1
To meet new people	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	--	2	--	--	2
To improve my earning potential	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from peers	--	1	--	--	1
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	2	1	--	--	3
No specific reason	1	--	--	1	2
Other	1	--	--	--	1
Divorced:					
Desire to achieve a degree	2	1	1	5	9
Job upgrading	--	--	--	--	--
Prepare for a job	--	3	4	3	10
To resume an interrupted college career	--	--	--	--	--
Prepare for a career change	--	--	--	--	--
To meet new people	--	--	--	--	--
To supplement family income	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	--	--	1	--	1
To improve my earning potential	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from peers	--	--	--	1	1
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	--	1	1
No specific reason	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	1	--	--	1
Total	36	36	34	24	130

Note: Two females and three male adult students failed to respond to the question.

Closer examination revealed that proportionately more married women ($n = 10$) than married men ($n = 7$) selected "Prepare for a job" as the primary reason for entering college. There is also evidence of age differential for married women regarding their primary reason for entering college. Of the married women in the 26-30 age group, ten reported "Desire to achieve a degree" as their first choice and only two married women in the 31+ age group indicated that as the primary reason. The reverse occurred in the secondary reason selected by married women in both age groups. More in the 31+ age group selected "Prepare for a job" ($n = 6$) as the first choice for entering college, and in the 26-30 age group, only four women selected it as their primary choice.

Proportionately more single women ($n = 11$) than single men ($n = 3$) indicated "Desire to achieve a degree" as their primary reason for entering college. The reasons selected by single men were more diversified. Seven divorced women, almost equally divided by age group, reported "Prepare for a job" as the primary reason for entering college, while this reason was cited by only three divorced men in the 31+ age group.

Reasons for Re-entering College

Adult students who had re-entered college were asked to select as many of the fourteen stated reasons on the questionnaire that were applicable. This variable was also examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The results, reported in Table 20, show that there are differences between married, single, and divorced students as to the reported reasons for re-entering college.

Table 20. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Reasons for Re-entering College, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Reasons for Re-entering College					
<u>Married:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	8	7	4	7	26
Job upgrading	8	12	2	6	28
Prepare for a job	4	4	3	2	13
To resume an interrupted college career	1	6	3	2	12
Prepare for a career change	5	7	6	3	21
To meet new people	--	--	2	2	4
To supplement family income	--	--	--	1	1
For intellectual stimulation	4	11	7	9	31
To improve my earning potential	3	6	5	5	19
Pressure from peers	--	1	--	--	1
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	--	--	--
No specific reason	--	--	1	--	1
Other					
<u>Single:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	3	4	8	2	17
Job upgrading	5	1	4	--	10
Prepare for a job	3	1	5	1	10
To resume an interrupted college career	3	1	5	--	9
Prepare for a career change	2	1	6	2	11
To meet new people	1	--	1	--	2
To supplement family income	--	--	1	--	1
For intellectual stimulation	3	4	5	2	14
To improve my earning potential	5	3	3	1	12
Pressure from peers	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	2	--	2	--	4
No specific reason	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	1	1	--	2
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	--	1	3	5	9
Job upgrading	--	2	3	3	8
Prepare for a job	--	1	1	1	3
To resume an interrupted college career	--	1	2	2	5
Prepare for a career change	--	2	2	6	10
To meet new people	--	--	1	--	1
To supplement family income	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	--	1	3	4	8
To improve my earning potential	--	1	3	3	7
Pressure from peers	--	--	--	1	1
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	--	--	--
No specific reason	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	1	--	1	2

Note: Adult students could indicate as many of the reasons for re-entering college as were applicable.

Married students reported as reasons for re-entering college:

(1) Intellectual stimulation (n = 31); (2) Job upgrading (n = 28); (3) Desire to achieve a degree (n = 26); and (4) Prepare for a career change (n = 21). Single adults reported: (1) Desire to achieve a degree (n = 17); (2) Intellectual stimulation (n = 14); (3) To improve my earning potential (n = 12); and (4) Prepare for a career change (n = 11), as reasons for re-entering college. Divorced adult students chose for their reasons for re-entering college: (1) Prepare for a career change (n = 10); (2) Desire to achieve a degree (n = 9); (3) Job upgrading (n = 8); and (4) To improve my earning potential (n = 7).

From those selected reasons for re-entering college, adult students were asked to indicate which was their primary reason. This variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The data presented in Table 21 show that differences exist among married, single, and divorced adult students as to their primary reasons for re-entering college. Married students reported: (1) Intellectual stimulation (n = 16); (2) Desire to achieve a degree (n = 15); (3) Prepare for a career change (n = 12); and (4) Job upgrading (n = 10), as the primary reasons for re-entering college. Closer examination of the married student data reveal that while ten married men indicated Job upgrading as a primary reason, no married women reported it as a primary factor.

Single students reported: (1) Desire to achieve a degree (n = 6); Job upgrading (n = 5); and a tie between Prepare for a job (n = 4), Career change (n = 4), and Intellectual stimulation (n = 4).

Table 21. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Primary Reason for Re-entering College, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Primary Reason for Re-entering College					
<u>Married:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	5	5	2	3	15
Job upgrading	6	4	--	--	10
Prepare for a job	--	--	--	2	2
To resume an interrupted college career	--	1	1	--	2
Prepare for a career change	3	4	4	1	12
To meet new people	--	--	2	2	4
To supplement family income	--	--	--	1	1
For intellectual stimulation	3	7	4	2	16
To improve my earning potential	1	2	--	1	4
Pressure from peers	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	--	--	--
No specific reason	--	--	1	--	1
Other	3	--	3	1	7
<u>Single:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	1	1	3	1	6
Job upgrading	3	1	1	--	5
Prepare for a job	3	--	1	--	4
To resume an interrupted college career	--	--	2	--	2
Prepare for a career change	--	--	2	2	4
To meet new people	--	--	--	--	--
To supplement family income	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	1	3	--	--	4
To improve my earning potential	1	--	--	--	1
Pressure from peers	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	--	--	--
No specific reason	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	--	2	--	2
<u>Divorced:</u>					
Desire to achieve a degree	--	--	--	2	2
Job upgrading	--	--	2	2	4
Prepare for a job	--	--	--	--	--
To resume an interrupted college career	--	--	1	--	1
Prepare for a career change	--	1	--	6	7
To meet new people	--	--	--	--	--
To supplement family income	--	--	--	--	--
For intellectual stimulation	--	--	--	--	--
To improve my earning potential	--	--	2	--	2
Pressure from peers	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from spouse	--	--	--	--	--
Pressure from parents	--	--	--	--	--
No specific reason	--	--	--	--	--
Other	--	1	--	--	1
Total	30	30	31	23	114

Note: Eight female and thirteen male adult students failed to respond to the question.

Divorced students reported as their reasons: (1) Prepare for a career change ($n = 7$), and (2) Job upgrading ($n = 4$). It should be noted, however, that the ratio between divorced men and women was six women over 30 years to only one man over 30 years who cited Prepare for a career change as the primary reason for re-entering college. Only divorced women reported Job upgrading as the second most important reason for re-entry.

Twenty-one students did not respond to the re-entry question because it was not applicable to their situation.

Number of Times Withdrawing from the University

Adult students reported on the number of times they had withdrawn from the university. This variable was examined by sex, by age group, and by marital status. The results are illustrated in Table 22. Fifty-six married men and women reported that they withdrew for the first time fall term 1979. Twenty-four reported that they had withdrawn one or more times previously. Nineteen single adult students reported having withdrawn for the first time and thirteen had done so at least one or more times.

Divorced students were equally divided in the number of times they had withdrawn from the university. Eleven men and women reported having done so for the first time fall term 1979, and eleven reported that they had withdrawn one or more times previously.

Table 22. Frequency of the Number of Adult Students Who Withdrew Fall Term 1979, by Number of Times Withdrawn from the University, Sex, Age Group, and Marital Status

Marital Status	Sex				Total
	Male		Female		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	26-30 Years	31+ Years	
Number of Times Withdrawn from the University					
<u>Married:</u>					
First time	16	18	14	8	56
Once before	9	4	1	2	16
Twice before	1	2	1	1	5
Three or more	--	1	1	1	3
<u>Single:</u>					
First time	5	3	9	2	19
Once before	2	2	1	2	7
Twice before	1	--	2	--	3
Three or more	2	1	--	--	3
<u>Divorced:</u>					
First time	1	1	4	5	11
Once before	2	1	1	2	6
Twice before	--	1	--	3	4
Three or more	--	--	1	--	1
Total	39	34	35	26	134

Note: One adult male student failed to respond to marital status, therefore N = 134.

Summary

The demographic data on adult students who withdrew from Michigan State University during fall term 1979, can be summarized as follows:

- Proportionately more women than men withdrew from the university fall term 1979. While the majority of the adult students were married, more men were married than women and more women were divorced than men. Single students were almost equally divided by sex.
- Married men in the 26-30 and 31+ age groups, and married women in the 26-30 age group, were almost equally divided as to whether they did or did not have children, while married women in the 31+ age group, more had children than not.
- The majority of adult students enrolled in college for the first time between the ages of 16-19 years. A number of men, however, also enrolled in college for the first time between the ages of 20-24 years, which is probably reflective of prior military service.
- While the majority of the adult students were enrolled on a part-time basis fall term, more of the part-time adult students were married and divorced, than single. For the most part, adult students were not financial aid recipients, but supported their educational pursuits by working 36+ hours a week.

- The majority of adult students were enrolled in the College of Social Science and the College of Education, pursuing in almost equal numbers, their first B.A. or M.A. degrees. If, however, the number of adults who were pursuing their second B.A.'s were combined with those working toward their first bachelor's, then there were more adult students pursuing bachelor's degrees than master's. More of the divorced adult students, the majority of whom were women, were working toward their bachelor's than toward their master's. GPA's above 2.51 were reported by the majority of the adult students.
- Married and single students consistently reported that they primarily enrolled in college for the first time in order to achieve a degree and to prepare for a job. More of the married women reported that they initially entered college to prepare for a job than did the married men. More women in the 31+ age group also reported that they entered college initially to prepare for a job.
- Married students reported that they re-entered college for intellectual stimulation, to achieve a degree, prepare for a career change, and for job up-grading. Single students reported they re-entered college primarily to achieve a degree, for job up-grading, to prepare for a job, and for a career change. The divorced students, on the other hand, the majority of whom were women, re-entered college primarily for a career change and for job upgrading.

Analysis of Reasons for Withdrawal
and Satisfaction with Michigan
State University

This part of the chapter is concerned with the analysis by each of the independent variables as to the reasons students withdraw from Michigan State University and their degree of satisfaction with various aspects of the University.

The Chi-Square Test was utilized in analyzing the data to determine any statistical significance between the independent demographic variables (sex, age group, marital status, and children) and each of the dependent variables listed under reasons for withdrawing and degree of satisfaction. Because of the relatively small number of students in the sample and because of the way the responses were distributed, only the main effects of the four independent variables were tested. The researcher was unable to look at the interaction effects between the variables without breaking the underlying assumption of the Chi-Square Test which states that "in general, no theoretical frequency should be smaller than 5" (Isaac and Michael, 1979, p. 135).

Reasons for Withdrawal

Student responses by major, moderate, and minor reasons for all the items in this section of the questionnaire, were too sparse for valid statistical analysis by degree of reasons for withdrawing. It was decided, therefore, to collapse these three categories into one category labeled "Reasons," and to compare it with the "Not a Reason" responses. These two categories were then statistically tested by the independent variables of sex, age group, marital status, and

children. The results of these tests will be presented for each sub-area of potential reasons for withdrawing.

Academic Reasons

To examine which of the academic reasons were selected most often by adult students, frequencies on each of the variables were calculated. As illustrated in Table 23, the most frequently selected reasons for withdrawing from the university for academic reasons by adult students were: (1) *needed a temporary break from studies* (29.6%), (2) *inadequate study techniques or habits* (20.0%), and (3) *lack of interest* (16.3%). The fourth reason selected was tied between *found courses too difficult* and *unsure of major and need to leave school to decide on possible careers* (15.6%).

Because of too small frequencies for valid chi-square analysis, three items for withdrawing under academic reasons were totally eliminated from the testing and four others could not be tested by marital status. Each of the remaining academic reasons for withdrawal were then tested by the independent variables.

Needed a temporary break from studies was shown to be significantly different for the two age groups. The results are presented in Table 24.

From Table 24, it can be seen that those adult students in the 26-30 age group more often reported that they needed a temporary break from studies ($f_o = 30$) than what was expected ($f_e = 22.22$). Adult students in the 31+ age group reported this item less often ($f_o = 10$) than what was expected ($f_e = 17.78$) as a reason for withdrawing.

Table 23. Frequency of Adult Student Responses as to Reason or Not a Reason for Withdrawal for Academic Reasons (percentages in parentheses) (N = 135)

Academic Reasons	Frequency		
	Reason	Not a Reason	No Response
<i>Low grades^a</i>	13 (9.7)	116 (85.9)	6 (4.4)
<i>Found courses too difficult</i>	21 (15.6)	108 (80.0)	6 (4.4)
<i>Inadequate study techniques or habits</i>	27 (20.0)	104 (77.0)	4 (3.0)
<i>Needed a temporary break from studies</i>	40 (29.6)	90 (66.7)	5 (3.7)
<i>Major or courses not available at this university</i>	13 (9.6)	117 (86.7)	5 (3.7)
<i>Unsure of major and need to leave school to decide on possible careers</i>	21 (15.6)	108 (80.0)	6 (4.4)
<i>Course work not challenging^a</i>	8 (5.9)	122 (90.4)	5 (3.7)
<i>Learned what I came to learn^b</i>	1 (0.7)	129 (95.6)	5 (3.7)
<i>Dissatisfaction with major department</i>	15 (11.2)	114 (84.4)	6 (4.4)
<i>Lack of interest</i>	22 (16.3)	107 (79.3)	6 (4.4)
<i>Course cancelled^b</i>	6 (4.5)	123 (91.1)	6 (4.4)
<i>Fear of ability to do well^a</i>	17 (12.6)	113 (83.7)	5 (3.7)
<i>Other</i>	21 (15.5)	58 (43.0)	56 (41.5)

^aFrequency too small for valid test by marital status.

^bFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.

Table 24. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Academic Reasons by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

<i>Needed a Temporary Break from Studies</i>	Age Group	
	26-30 Years	31+ Years
Not a reason	45 (52.78)	50 (42.22)
Is a reason	30 (22.22)	10 (17.78)

Corrected chi-square (1) = 7.621 $p < .0058$.

The following items were shown to be significantly different by children: (1) *needed a temporary break from studies*, (2) *unsure of major and need to leave school to decide on possible career*, and (3) *lack of interest*. These results are presented in Table 25.

It can be seen from Table 25 that adult students with children reported that they needed a temporary break from studies less often ($f_o = 9$) as a reason for withdrawing than what was expected ($f_e = 15.39$). Adult students without children reported this item more often ($f_o = 28$) than what was expected ($f_e = 21.60$).

Adult students with children reported that they were *unsure of their major and needed to withdraw to decide on possible careers* less often ($f_o = 3$) than what was expected ($f_e = 8.32$), while adult students without children cited this item as a reason for withdrawing more often ($f_o = 17$) than what was expected ($f_e = 11.68$).

Table 25. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Academic Reasons by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Academic Reasons	Children	
	Yes	No
<i>Needed a temporary break from studies^a</i>		
Not a reason	43 (36.60)	45 (51.39)
Is a reason	9 (15.39)	28 (21.60)
<i>Unsure of major and need to leave school to decide on possible careers^b</i>		
Not a reason	49 (43.68)	56 (61.32)
Is a reason	3 (8.32)	17 (11.68)
<i>Lack of interest^c</i>		
Not a reason	48 (43.26)	56 (60.73)
Is a reason	4 (8.73)	17 (12.26)

^aCorrected chi-square (1) = 5.486, $p < .0192$.

^bCorrected chi-square (1) = 5.692, $p < .0170$.

^cCorrected chi-square (1) = 4.227, $p < .0398$.

Lack of interest was reported less often as a reason for withdrawing by adult students with children ($f_o = 4$) than expected ($f_e = 8.73$), while those without children reported this item more frequently ($f_o = 17$) than what was expected ($f_e = 12.26$).

Employment Reasons

To examine which of the employment reasons were selected most often by adult students, frequencies on each of the variables were calculated. As illustrated in Table 26, the most frequently selected employment reasons by adult students for withdrawing from the university were *conflict between job and studies* (57.8%) and *accepted a job and didn't need more school* (5.2%).

Table 26. Frequency of Adult Student Responses as to Reason or Not a Reason for Withdrawal for Employment Reasons (percentages in parentheses) (N = 135)

Employment Reasons	Frequency		
	Reason	Not a Reason	No Response
<i>Conflict between job and studies</i>	78 (57.8)	54 (40.0)	3 (2.2)
<i>Accepted job and didn't need more school^a</i>	7 (5.2)	120 (88.9)	8 (5.9)
<i>Couldn't find a job^a</i>	1 (0.8)	126 (93.3)	8 (5.9)

^aFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.

Because of too small frequencies for valid chi-square analysis, two reasons for withdrawing were totally eliminated from the testing: *accepted job and didn't need more school* and *couldn't find a job*. Only one of these employment reasons for withdrawal could be tested by each of the independent variables. *Conflict between job and studies* was shown to be significantly different by the children variable. The results are presented in Table 27.

Table 27. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Employment Reasons by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

<i>Conflict between Job and Studies</i>	Children	
	Yes	No
Not a reason	29 (22.46)	25 (31.53)
Is a reason	23 (29.53)	48 (41.46)

Chi-square (1) = 4.889, $p < .0270$.

It can be seen from the table that adult students with children reported less often that there was a conflict between job and studies as a reason for withdrawing ($f_o = 23$) than what was expected ($f_e = 29.53$). Adult students without children, on the other hand, reported this item as a reason for withdrawing more often ($f_o = 48$) than the expected frequency ($f_e = 41.46$).

Financial Reasons

To examine which of the financial reasons were selected most often by adult students, frequencies on each of the variables was calculated. The most frequently selected reasons for withdrawing because of financial problems were: (1) *not enough money to go to school* (25.1%), (2) *this school too expensive* (15.5%), and (3) *financial aid was not sufficient* (8.2%). The results are shown in Table 28.

Table 28. Frequency of Adult Student Responses as to Reason or Not a Reason for Withdrawal for Financial Reasons (percentages in parentheses) (N = 135)

Financial Reasons	Frequency		
	Reason	Not a Reason	No Response
<i>Not enough money to go to school</i>	34 (25.1)	97 (71.9)	4 (3.0)
<i>Applied but could not obtain aid^a</i>	8 (5.9)	122 (90.4)	5 (3.7)
<i>Financial aid was not sufficient^b</i>	11 (8.2)	118 (87.4)	6 (4.4)
<i>Child care not available or too costly^a</i>	8 (6.0)	121 (89.6)	6 (4.4)
<i>This school too expensive</i>	21 (15.5)	110 (81.5)	4 (3.0)

^aFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.

^bFrequency too small for valid test by marital status.

The financial reasons for withdrawal were tested by the independent variables. Because of too small frequencies for valid chi-square analysis, two reasons for withdrawing were totally eliminated from the testing: *applied but could not obtain aid* and *child care not available or too costly*. Shown to be significantly different by age groups was *not enough money to go to school*. The results are shown in Table 29.

Table 29. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Financial Reasons by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

<i>Not Enough Money to Go to School</i>	Age Group	
	26-30 Years	31+ Years
Not a reason	49 (56.11)	52 (44.88)
Is a reason	26 (18.88)	8 (15.11)

Corrected chi-square (1) = 6.959, $p < .0083$.

As illustrated in Table 29, adult students in the 26-30 age group, reported more often that they did not have enough money to go to school ($f_o = 26$) than what was expected ($f_e = 18.88$), as a reason for withdrawing. This item was reported less often by adult students in the 31+ age group ($F_o = 8$) as a reason for withdrawing than expected ($f_e = 15.11$).

The item *not enough money to go to school* was also shown to be significantly different by marital status. The results are presented in Table 30.

Table 30. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Financial Reasons by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

<i>Not Enough Money to Go to School</i>	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
Not a reason	65 (60.29)	19 (24.11)	17 (16.58)
Is a reason	15 (19.70)	13 (7.88)	5 (5.41)

Chi-square (2) = 5.944, $p < .0512$.

As illustrated in Table 30, married adult students reported less often that they did *not have enough money to go to school* ($f_o = 15$) as a reason for withdrawing, than what was expected ($f_e = 19.70$). Single adults, however, cite this as a reason more often ($f_o = 13$) than expected ($f_e = 7.88$).

Personal Reasons

To examine which of the personal reasons were selected most often by adult students, frequencies on each of the variables was calculated. As shown in Table 31, the most frequently selected personal reasons for withdrawing by adult students were: (1) *found study too time consuming* (37.1%); (2) *home responsibilities were too great*

Table 31. Frequency of Adult Student Responses as to Reason or Not a Reason for Withdrawal for Personal Reasons (percentages in parentheses) (N = 135)

Personal Reasons	Frequency		
	Reason	Not a Reason	No Response
<i>Found study too time consuming</i>	50 (37.1)	84 (62.2)	1 (0.7)
<i>Home responsibilities were too great</i>	48 (35.5)	85 (63.0)	2 (1.5)
<i>Family illness^a</i>	9 (6.7)	123 (91.1)	3 (2.2)
<i>Personal illness</i>	24 (17.8)	109 (80.7)	2 (1.5)
<i>Fulfilled my personal goals in schooling^a</i>	4 (3.0)	128 (94.8)	3 (2.2)
<i>Marital situation changed my education plans^a</i>	12 (8.9)	120 (88.9)	3 (2.2)
<i>Personal problems</i>	38 (28.2)	96 (71.1)	1 (0.7)
<i>Moving out of the area^b</i>	12 (8.9)	121 (89.6)	2 (1.5)
<i>Lack of encouragement from spouse^b</i>	11 (8.2)	121 (89.6)	3 (2.2)
<i>Lack of encouragement from family^a</i>	4 (2.9)	129 (95.6)	2 (1.5)
<i>Lack of encouragement from friends^a</i>	4 (2.9)	129 (95.6)	2 (1.5)
<i>Death of a family member^a</i>	2 (1.5)	130 (96.3)	3 (2.2)

^aFrequency too small for chi-square analysis.

^bFrequency too small for valid testing by marital status.

(35.5%); (3) *personal problems* (28.2%), and (4) *personal illness* (17.8%).

These personal reasons for withdrawing were then tested by the independent variables. Because of too small frequencies for valid chi-square analysis, four personal reasons for withdrawal were totally eliminated from the testing and two others could not be tested by marital status.

Home responsibilities were too great was shown to be significantly different by the marital status variable. The results are presented in Table 32.

Table 32. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Personal Reasons by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

<i>Home Responsibilities Were Too Great</i>	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
Not a reason	45 (51.94)	27 (20.77)	15 (14.28)
Is a reason	35 (28.05)	5 (11.22)	7 (7.71)

Chi-square (2) = 8.06211, $p < .0178$.

As illustrated in Table 32, married adult students reported more often ($f_o = 35$) that *home responsibilities were too great* as a reason for withdrawing than what was expected ($f_e = 11.22$). Single adult students reported this item as a reason for withdrawing less often ($f_o = 5$) than what was expected ($f_e = 11.22$).

The results presented in Table 33 illustrate that *personal illness* was shown to be significantly different by the children variable.

Table 33. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Personal Reasons by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

<i>Personal Illness</i>	Children	
	Yes	No
Not a reason	37 (42.01)	64 (58.98)
Is a reason	15 (9.98)	9 (14.01)

Corrected chi-square (1) = 4.329, $p < .0375$.

As can be seen in Table 33, more adult students with children reported *personal illness* as a reason for withdrawing ($f_o = 15$) than what was expected ($f_e = 9.98$). Those adult students without children reported this item as a reason less often ($f_o = 9$) than what was expected ($f_e = 14.01$).

Since adult students could check more than one item in this section of the questionnaire, this researcher felt it would be important to examine how many statements were selected as reasons for withdrawal. The total number of items were summed for each of the subsections: Academic, Employment, Financial, and Personal. They were then analyzed

by the four independent variables. The results of these tests will be presented for each subsection.

Number of Academic Reasons Checked

To examine the number of statements checked by adult students, frequencies were calculated for the sum of the items checked. Table 34 illustrates that 34.1 percent of the adult students did not check any of the academic items; 23.0 percent checked one item; and 17.0 percent checked two items as reasons for withdrawing from the University.

Table 34. Frequency of the Number of Academic Reasons Checked for Withdrawing

Number of Items Checked	Frequency	Percent
None	46	34.1
One	31	23.0
Two	23	17.0
Three ^a	12	8.9
Four ^b	11	8.1
Five ^b	7	5.2
Six ^b	4	3.0
Nine ^b	<u>1</u>	<u>0.7</u>
Total	135	100.0

^aFrequency too small for valid test by marital status and children.

^bFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.

To validly analyze this data using chi-square, the frequency distribution of reasons checked were collapsed into four intervals: none, one, two, and three or more.

The results of the chi-square analysis by sex are shown in Table 35. Male and female adult students did not differ significantly as to the number of academic reasons checked.

Table 35. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Academic Reasons Checked by Sex (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Academic Reasons Checked	Sex	
	Male	Female
None	28 (25.21)	18 (20.78)
One	12 (16.99)	19 (14.00)
Two	12 (12.60)	11 (10.39)
Three or more	22 (19.18)	13 (15.81)

Chi-square (3) = 4.906, $p < .1788$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by age group are shown in Table 36. The adult students in the 26-30 and 31+ age groups did not differ significantly in the number of academic reasons checked.

Table 36. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Academic Reasons Checked by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Academic Reasons Checked	Age Group	
	26-30 Years	31+ Years
None	25 (25.55)	21 (20.44)
One	15 (17.22)	16 (13.77)
Two	11 (12.77)	12 (10.22)
Three or more	24 (19.44)	11 (15.55)

Chi-square (3) = 3.630, $p < .3043$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by marital status are shown in Table 37. Married, single, or divorced adult students did not differ significantly as to the number of academic reasons checked.

The results of the chi-square analysis by children variable are shown in Table 38. Adult students with or without children did not differ significantly as to the number of academic reasons checked.

Number of Employment Reasons Checked

Frequencies were calculated on each of the employment variables so that the numbers of statements checked by the adult students could be examined. Table 39 shows that the majority (96.3%) of the adult students checked either none or one employment reason.

Table 37. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Academic Reasons Checked by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Academic Reasons Checked	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
None	32 (27.46)	8 (10.98)	6 (7.55)
One	18 (18.50)	8 (7.40)	5 (5.08)
Two	11 (13.73)	4 (5.49)	8 (3.77)
Three or more	19 (20.29)	12 (8.11)	3 (5.58)

Chi-square (6) = 10.749, $p < .0964$.

Table 38. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Academic Reasons Checked by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Academic Reasons Checked	Children	Without Children
None	20 (17.88)	23 (25.11)
One	13 (11.64)	15 (16.35)
Two	10 (8.32)	10 (11.68)
Three or more	9 (14.14)	25 (19.85)

Chi-square (3) = 4.439, $p < .25$.

Table 39. Frequency of Number of Employment Reasons Checked for Withdrawing

Number of Employment Reasons Checked	Frequency	Percent
None	54	40.0
One	76	56.3
Two ^a	<u>5</u>	<u>3.7</u>
Total	135	100.0

^aFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.

To validly analyze this data using chi-square, it was necessary to collapse the frequency distribution of these reasons into two intervals: none and one or more.

The results of the chi-square analysis by sex are shown in Table 40. Male and female adult students did not differ significantly as to the number of employment reasons checked.

Table 40. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Employment Reasons Checked by Sex (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Employment Reasons Checked	Sex	
	Male	Female
None	26 (29.60)	28 (24.40)
One or more	48 (44.40)	33 (36.60)

Corrected chi-square (1) = 1.198, $p < .2738$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by age group are illustrated in Table 41. As can be seen, adult students in the 26-30 and 31+ age groups did not differ significantly as to the number of employment reasons checked.

Table 41. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Employment Reasons Checked by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Employment Reasons Checked	Age Group	
	26-30 Years	31+ Years
None	28 (30.00)	26 (24.00)
One or more	47 (45.00)	34 (36.00)

Corrected chi-square (1) = .2813, $p < .5959$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by marital status are illustrated in Table 42. As can be seen, the number of employment reasons checked by married, single, or divorced students did not differ significantly.

The results of the chi-square analysis by children illustrated in Table 43 were shown to be significant.

As shown in Table 43, adult students with children indicated that employment was not a reason for withdrawal ($f_o = 28$) more often than expected ($f_e = 21.21$), and adult students without children indicated one or more reasons ($f_o = 50$) more often than expected ($f_e = 43.21$).

Table 42. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Employment Reasons Checked by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Employment Reasons Checked	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
None	36 (32.23)	11 (12.89)	7 (8.86)
One or more	44 (47.76)	21 (19.10)	15 (13.13)

Chi-square (2) = 1.859, $p < .3947$.

Table 43. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Employment Reasons Checked by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Employment Reasons Checked		
	Children	Without Children
None	28 (21.21)	23 (29.78)
One or more	24 (30.78)	50 (43.21)

Chi-square (2) = 6.2778, $p < .025$.

Number of Financial Reasons Checked

To examine the number of financial reasons checked by adult students, frequencies were calculated for the sum of the items checked. The results are presented in Table 44. As can be seen, the majority of adult students (66.7%) did not check any financial reasons and 33.3 percent checked one or more reasons.

Table 44. Frequency and Percentage of Number of Financial Reasons Checked for Withdrawing

Number of Financial Reasons Checked	Frequency	Percent
None	90	66.7
One	23	17.0
Two ^a	11	8.1
Three ^a	7	5.2
Four ^a	<u>4</u>	<u>3.0</u>
Total	135	100.0

^aFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.

To validly analyze this data using chi-square, the frequency distributions of financial reasons were collapsed into three intervals: none, one, two or more.

Table 45 illustrates the results of the chi-square analysis by sex. It can be noted that male and female adult students did not differ significantly as to the number of financial reasons checked.

Table 45. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Financial Reasons Checked by Sex (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Financial Reasons Checked	Sex	
	Male	Female
None	52 (49.33)	38 (40.66)
One	12 (12.60)	11 (10.39)
Two or more	10 (12.05)	12 (9.94)

Chi-square (2) = 4.015, $p < .1343$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by age group are illustrated in Table 46. As can be noted, adult students did not differ significantly as to the number of financial reasons checked by the two age groups.

Table 46. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Financial Reasons Checked by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Financial Reasons Checked	Age Group	
	26-30 Years	31+ Years
None	45 (50.00)	45 (40.00)
One	14 (12.77)	9 (10.22)
Two or more	16 (12.22)	6 (9.77)

Chi-square (2) = 4.05, $p < .1343$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by marital status are illustrated in Table 47. The number of financial reasons checked was shown to be significantly different for married, single, and divorced adult students.

Table 47. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Financial Reasons Checked by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Financial Reasons Checked	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
None	60 (53.73)	19 (21.49)	11 (14.77)
One	11 (13.13)	4 (5.25)	7 (3.61)
Two or more	9 (13.13)	9 (5.25)	4 (3.61)

Chi-square (4) = 9.824, $p < .0435$.

As shown in Table 47, single adult students ($f_o = 9$) gave two or more financial reasons for withdrawing than what was expected ($f_e = 5.25$). More married students ($f_o = 60$) indicated that finances were not a reason for withdrawing than expected ($f_e = 53.73$). The results for the divorced adult students are much less clear-cut, with some divorced students ($f_o = 11$) indicating that finances were not a reason for withdrawing whereas an equal number indicating that, in fact, there was a reason.

Table 48 illustrates the results of the chi-square analysis by children. There were no significant differences shown between adult students who had children and those who did not have children as to the number of financial reasons checked for withdrawing.

Table 48. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Financial Reasons Checked by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Financial Reasons Checked	Children	Without Children
None	35 (34.52)	48 (48.47)
One	12 (8.73)	9 (12.26)
Two or more	5 (8.73)	16 (12.26)

Chi-square (3) = 4.837, $p < .25$.

Number of Personal Reasons Checked

To examine the number of personal reasons checked by adult students, frequencies were calculated for the sum of the items checked. The results are presented in Table 49. As shown in the table, 32.6 percent of the adult students did not check any of the personal reasons, 26.7 percent checked one item; 16.3 percent checked two items, and the remainder of the adult students (24.4%) checked more than two.

Table 49. Frequency of Number and Percentage of Personal Reasons Checked for Withdrawing

Number of Personal Reasons Checked	Frequency	Percent
None	44	32.6
One	36	26.7
Two	22	16.3
Three	14	10.4
Four ^a	7	5.2
Five ^a	7	5.2
Six ^a	3	2.2
Seven ^a	1	0.7
Eight ^a	<u>1</u>	<u>0.7</u>
Total	135	100.0

^aFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.

To validly analyze this data using chi-square, it was necessary to collapse the frequency distribution of personal reasons into four intervals: none, one, two and three or more reasons checked.

The results of the chi-square analysis by sex are shown in Table 50. Male and female adult students did not differ significantly as to the number of personal reasons checked for withdrawing.

Table 51 illustrates the results of the chi-square analysis by age group. As can be seen from the table, there were no significant differences by age group as to the number of personal reasons checked.

Table 50. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Personal Reasons Checked by Sex (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Personal Reasons Checked	Sex	
	Male	Female
None	24 (24.11)	20 (19.88)
One	18 (19.73)	18 (16.26)
Two	14 (12.05)	8 (9.94)
Three or more	18 (18.08)	15 (14.91)

Chi-square (3) = 1.030, $p < .7939$.

Table 51. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Personal Reasons Checked by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Personal Reasons Checked	Age Group	
	26-30 Years	31+ Years
None	24 (24.44)	20 (16.00)
One	18 (20.00)	18 (16.00)
Two	14 (12.22)	8 (9.77)
Three or more	19 (18.33)	14 (14.66)

Chi-square (3) = 1.104, $p < .7760$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by marital status are shown in Table 52. There were no significant differences between married, single, or divorced adult students as to the number of personal reasons checked for withdrawing.

Table 52. Chi-Square Analysis of the Total Number of Personal Reasons Checked by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Personal Reasons Checked	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
None	24 (26.26)	13 (10.50)	7 (7.22)
One	24 (21.49)	9 (8.59)	3 (5.91)
Two	9 (13.13)	8 (5.25)	5 (3.61)
Three or more	23 (19.10)	2 (7.64)	7 (5.25)

Chi-square (6) = 11.349, $p < .0782$.

The results of the chi-square analysis by children are illustrated in Table 53. There were no significant differences shown between adult students who had children and those who did not, as to the number of personal reasons checked for withdrawing from the university.

Table 53. Chi-Square Analysis of Total Number of Personal Reasons Checked by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Number of Personal Reasons Checked	Children	Without Children
None	14 (16.22)	25 (22.77)
One	14 (14.14)	20 (19.85)
Two	9 (8.73)	12 (12.26)
Three or more	15 (12.89)	16 (18.10)

Chi-square (3) = 1.2135, $p < .75$.

Satisfaction with Michigan State University

The response of the adult students as to their degree of satisfaction with Michigan State University were examined next. Because of the small frequencies in the degree categories of "Much," "Moderate," "Little," and "None"--"Much" and "Moderate" were combined into the category "Some"; "Little" and "None" were combined into the category "Little or No." The frequency of responses to each of these two degree categories and the "Does Not Apply" category are presented in Table 54.

The first aspect of these results to be examined were the possible differences in ratings of the two degrees of satisfaction by the independent variables.

Table 54. Frequency of Adult Student Response to Degree of Satisfaction with Michigan State University (percentage in parentheses)

Aspects of Michigan State University	Degree of Satisfaction			
	Some	Little or No	Does Not Apply	No Response
Counseling/guidance services	33 (24.4)	27 (20.0)	73 (54.1)	2 (1.5)
Academic advising services	45 (33.3)	37 (27.4)	50 (37.0)	3 (2.2)
Library services	82 (60.8)	12 (8.9) ^b	38 (28.1)	3 (2.2)
Employment opportunities	26 (19.3)	21 (15.5)	86 (63.7)	2 (1.5)
Financial aid opportunities	28 (20.8)	24 (17.7)	81 (60.0)	2 (1.5)
Cost of attending the university	36 (26.7)	51 (37.8)	45 (33.3)	3 (2.2)
Enrollment size of the university	42 (31.1)	31 (23.0)	60 (44.4)	2 (1.5)
Rules and regulations at the university	42 (31.1)	26 (19.3)	64 (47.4)	3 (2.2)
Extra-curricular opportunities	46 (34.0)	11 (8.1) ^c	76 (56.3)	2 (1.5)
Intellectual stimulation	85 (63.0)	16 (11.8) ^b	32 (23.7)	2 (1.5)
Cultural opportunities	74 (54.9)	14 (10.4) ^b	45 (33.3)	2 (1.5)
Social opportunities	62 (45.9)	16 (11.9) ^b	52 (38.5)	5 (3.7)
Recreational facilities	63 (46.7)	13 (9.6) ^b	56 (41.5)	3 (2.2)
Location of the university	88 (65.1)	13 (9.7) ^b	32 (23.7)	2 (1.5)
Residence/living accommodation	31 (23.0)	13 (9.6) ^b	87 (64.0)	4 (3.0)
Grading system	71 (52.6)	21 (15.5)	39 (28.9)	4 (3.0)
Course content in your major field	77 (57.1)	22 (16.3) ^b	34 (25.2)	2 (1.5)
Teaching in your major field	61 (45.2)	20 (14.8) ^b	49 (36.3)	5 (3.7)
Amount of contact with your instructors	64 (47.4)	38 (28.1)	31 (23.0)	2 (1.5)
Scheduling of classes	55 (40.7)	54 (40.0)	24 (17.8)	2 (1.5)
Getting into desired classes	72 (53.3)	33 (24.5)	27 (20.0)	3 (2.2)
Relevance of your major field to your career goals	76 (56.3)	22 (16.3) ^b	34 (25.2)	3 (2.2)
Information given to you about this university before enrolling	71 (52.6)	23 (17.0) ^b	39 (28.9)	2 (1.5)
Quality of students	86 (63.7)	9 (6.7) ^c	36 (26.7)	4 (3.0)
The university in general	99 (73.3)	10 (7.4) ^c	22 (16.3)	4 (3.0)
Opportunity to interact with own peer group	55 (40.7)	33 (24.5)	43 (31.9)	4 (3.0)
Attitude of faculty toward me as a student	70 (51.9)	32 (23.7)	29 (21.5)	4 (3.0)
Attitude of my advisor	62 (45.9)	24 (17.7) ^b	46 (34.1)	3 (2.2)
Attitude of administrative staff	59 (43.7)	27 (20.0)	44 (32.6)	5 (3.7)
Attitudes of clerical staff toward me as a student	65 (48.1)	23 (17.0) ^b	44 (32.6)	3 (2.2)
Quality of faculty	87 (64.4)	15 (12.0) ^b	28 (20.7)	5 (3.7)

^aFrequency too small for valid chi-square analysis.^bFrequency too small for valid test by marital status.^cFrequency too small for valid test by marital status, sex, and children.

The frequency ratings of "Some" and "Little or No" were statistically analyzed for each aspect on the questionnaire by the independent variables of sex, age group, marital status, and children.

The following aspects of the university were reported to be significantly different by the sex variable. The results are shown in Table 55.

Table 55. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to Degree of Satisfaction by Sex (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Sex	Degree of Satisfaction	
	Some	Little or No
<i>Academic advising services:</i> ^a		
Male	18 (23.04)	24 (18.95)
Female	27 (21.95)	13 (18.04)
<i>Attitudes of clerical staff toward me as a student:</i> ^b		
Male	40 (34.71)	7 (12.28)
Female	25 (30.28)	16 (10.71)

^aCorrected chi-square (1) = 4.0786, $p < .0434$.

^bCorrected chi-square (1) = 5.414, $p < .0200$.

From Table 55 it can be seen that more female adult students report ($f_o = 27$) some degree of satisfaction with the *academic advising services* than what was expected ($f_e = 21.95$) while fewer male adult students ($f_o = 18$) reported some degree of satisfaction than what was expected ($f_e = 23.04$).

More male adult students ($f_o = 40$) reported some satisfaction with *clerical attitudes* than expected ($f_e = 34.71$), while fewer female adult students ($f_o = 25$) reported some satisfaction with this aspect than was expected ($f_e = 30.28$).

Cost of attending the university and the *grading system* were found to be significantly different by marital status. The results are reported in Table 56.

Table 56. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to the Degree of Satisfaction by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Marital Status	Degree of Satisfaction	
	Some	Little or No
<i>Cost of attending the University:</i> ^a		
Married	19 (20.51)	30 (28.48)
Single	14 (9.62)	9 (13.37)
Divorced	3 (5.86)	11 (8.13)
<i>Grading system:</i> ^b		
Married	41 (36.92)	7 (11.07)
Single	15 (20.00)	11 (6.00)
Divorced	14 (13.07)	3 (3.92)

^aChi-square (2) = 6.174, $p < .0456$.

^bChi-square (2) = 7.650, $p < .0218$.

As Table 56 illustrates, single adult students more often ($f_o = 14$) reported some satisfaction with the *cost of attending the university* than what was expected ($f_e = 9.62$) and fewer divorced adult students reported some satisfaction with the *cost of attending the university* ($f_o = 3$) than what was expected ($f_e = 8.13$).

More married adult students ($f_o = 41$) reported some satisfaction with the *grading system* than expected ($f_e = 36.92$); however, there were fewer single adult students ($f_o = 15$) who reported some satisfaction with the *grading system* than what was expected ($f_e = 20.00$).

The *cost of attending the university* was shown to be significantly different by age group variable. The results are shown in Table 57.

Table 57. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to Degree of Satisfaction by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Age Group	Degree of Satisfaction	
	Some	Little or No
<i>Cost of attending the University:</i>		
26-30 Years	17 (21.93)	36 (31.06)
31+ Years	19 (14.06)	15 (19.93)

Corrected chi-square (1) = 3.907, $p < .0481$.

As illustrated in Table 57, more adult students in the 31+ age group ($f_o = 19$) reported some satisfaction with the *cost of attending the university* than what was expected ($f_e = 14.06$), while the adult

students in the 26-30 age group ($f_o = 17$) reported satisfaction less often than that which was expected ($f_e = 21.93$).

The *opportunity to interact with own peer group* and the *quality of the faculty* were shown to be significantly different by children. The results are shown in Table 58.

Table 58. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to Degree of Satisfaction by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Children Variable	Degree of Satisfaction	
	Some	Little or No
<i>Opportunity to interact with own peer group:</i> ^a		
Adults with children	12 (17.12)	40 (34.87)
Adults without children	16 (10.87)	17 (22.12)
<i>Quality of faculty:</i> ^b		
Adults with children	38 (34.16)	2 (5.83)
Adults without children	44 (47.83)	12 (8.16)

^aCorrected chi-square (1) = 4.806, $p < .0284$.

^bCorrected chi-square (1) = 3.823, $p < .0506$.

It can be seen from Table 58, that more adults without children ($f_o = 16$) reported some satisfaction with *opportunities to interact with their own peer group* than expected ($f_e = 10.87$); adult students with children reported that they were less satisfied ($f_o = 12$) with *opportunities to interact with their own peer group* than what was expected ($f_e = 17.12$).

More adults with children reported ($f_o = 38$) some degree of satisfaction with the *quality of the faculty* than what was expected ($f_e = 34.16$), while adults without children reported less often ($f_o = 44$) some satisfaction with this aspect than what was expected ($f_e = 47.83$).

This researcher then decided to investigate any differences which might exist between those adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the 31 listed aspects of Michigan State University and compare the responses with those labeled "Does not apply." The degree of satisfaction categories "Much," "Moderate," "Little," and "None," were collapsed into one category labeled "A Degree of Satisfaction." This category was then compared to responses labeled, "Does not apply."

These two categories were then statistically tested by the four independent variables of sex, age group, marital status, and children.

The results of the chi-square analysis by sex showed that male and female adult students did not differ significantly as to whether they did or did not report a degree of satisfaction with the 31 aspects of the university.

Financial aid opportunities, social opportunities, and recreational facilities were shown to be significantly different by the age group variable. The results are shown in Table 59.

As Table 59 illustrates, more adult students in the 31+ age group ($f_o = 44$) reported that *financial aid opportunities* did not apply to them than expected ($f_e = 36.88$) and fewer adult students ($f_o = 39$) in the 26-30 age group reported that *financial aid opportunities* did not apply to them than what was expected ($f_e = 46.11$).

Table 59. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to Does Not Apply or A Degree of Satisfaction Aspects of Michigan State University by Age Group (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Aspects of Michigan State University	Age Group	
	26-30 Years	31+ Years
<i>Financial aid opportunities:</i> ^a		
Does not apply	39 (46.11)	44 (36.88)
A degree of satisfaction	36 (38.89)	16 (23.11)
<i>Social opportunities:</i> ^b		
Does not apply	24 (31.66)	33 (35.33)
A degree of satisfaction	51 (43.33)	27 (34.66)
<i>Recreational facilities:</i> ^c		
Does not apply	26 (32.77)	33 (26.22)
A degree of satisfaction	49 (42.22)	27 (33.77)

^aCorrected chi-square (1) = 5.537, $p < .0186$.

^bCorrected chi-square (1) = 6.316, $p < .0120$.

^cCorrected chi-square (1) = 4.805, $p < .0284$.

More adult students in the 26-30 age group ($f_o = 51$) reported a degree of satisfaction with *social opportunities* on campus than expected ($f_e = 43.33$); however, there were fewer adult students in the 31+ age group ($f_o = 27$) who cited a degree of satisfaction with *social opportunities* than what was the expected frequency ($f_e = 34.66$).

Adult students in the 26-30 age group more often ($f_o = 49$) reported a degree of satisfaction with the university's *recreational facilities* than what was expected ($f_e = 42.22$); while those in the 31+ age group ($f_o = 27$), reported a degree of satisfaction less often than expected ($f_e = 33.77$).

There were fifteen significant differences reported by the marital status variable. The researcher decided to subdivide these fifteen aspects into academic, administrative, and extra-curricular issues. The results are shown in Tables 60, 61, and 62.

As Table 60 illustrates, more single students ($f_o = 26$) reported a degree of satisfaction with the university's *grading system* than the expected frequency ($f_e = 25.67$); while there were fewer married adult students ($f_o = 48$) who responded to the *grading system* than expected ($f_e = 54.32$).

More divorced students ($f_o = 20$) responded to the *course content in their major field* than the expected frequency ($f_e = 16.08$); while married students responded less often ($f_e = 53$) than what was expected ($f_e = 58.58$).

More single adult students ($f_o = 29$) reported a degree of satisfaction with *faculty attitude* than what was expected ($f_e = 24.11$);

Table 60. Chi-Square Analysis of Responses to Does Not Apply or a Degree of Satisfaction with Aspects of Michigan State University by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Academic Issues:			
Aspects of Michigan State University	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
<i>Grading system:</i> ^a			
Does not apply	32 (25.67)	6 (10.26)	5 (7.05)
A degree of satisfaction	48 (54.32)	26 (21.73)	17 (14.94)
<i>Course content in your major field:</i> ^b			
Does not apply	27 (21.47)	7 (8.59)	2 (5.91)
A degree of satisfaction	53 (58.50)	25 (23.40)	20 (16.08)
<i>Attitude of faculty toward me as a student:</i> ^c			
Does not apply	22 (19.70)	3 (7.88)	8 (5.41)
A degree of satisfaction	58 (60.29)	29 (24.11)	14 (16.58)
<i>Intellectual stimulation:</i> ^d			
Does not apply	35 (28.05)	6 (11.22)	6 (7.71)
A degree of satisfaction	45 (51.94)	26 (20.77)	16 (14.28)
<i>Quality of students:</i> ^e			
Does not apply	29 (23.88)	4 (9.55)	7 (6.56)
First-hand experience	51 (56.11)	28 (22.44)	15 (15.43)

^aChi-square (2) = 5.795, $p < .0500$.

^bChi-square (2) = 5.873, $p < .0500$.

^cChi-square (2) = 5.999, $p < .0498$.

^dChi-square (2) = 7.366, $p < .0252$.

^eChi-square (2) = 6.206, $p < .0449$.

while the married adult students ($f_o = 58$) responded less often to this aspect than what was expected ($f_e = 60.29$). Divorced students also responded to *faculty attitude* less often ($f_o = 14$) than expected ($f_e = 16.58$).

More single adult students ($f_o = 26$) responded to the *intellectual stimulation* aspect than what was expected ($f_e = 20.77$). There were fewer married adult students ($f_o = 45$) who responded than what was expected ($f_e = 51.94$), and there were also fewer divorced adult students ($f_o = 14$) who reported a degree of satisfaction with *intellectual stimulation* than what was expected ($f_e = 16.58$).

Single adult students again more often reported a degree of satisfaction ($f_o = 28$) with the *quality of the students* than expected ($f_e = 22.44$); however there were fewer married students ($f_o = 51$) who reported on this aspect than the expected frequency ($f_e = 56.11$).

As shown in Table 61, more single adult students ($f_o = 22$) reported a degree of satisfaction for the *size of the university enrollment* than expected ($f_e = 17.19$); and more divorced students ($f_o = 14$) also reported on the *university's enrollment* than expected ($f_e = 11.82$). There were fewer married students who reported ($f_o = 36$) on the *enrollment* aspect of the university than what was expected ($f_e = 42.99$).

More single students ($f_o = 21$) reported a degree of satisfaction with the *rules and regulations at the university* than expected ($f_e = 16.00$); while the married students reported about *rules and regulations* less often ($f_o = 33$) than what was expected ($f_e = 40.00$).

Table 61. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to Does Not Apply or A Degree of Satisfaction with Aspects of Michigan State University by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Administrative Issues:			
Aspects of Michigan State University	Marital Status		
	Married	Single	Divorced
<i>Enrollment size:</i> ^a			
Does not apply	44 (37.01)	10 (14.81)	8 (10.18)
A degree of satisfaction	36 (42.99)	22 (17.19)	14 (11.82)
<i>Rules and Regulations at the University:</i> ^b			
Does not apply	47 (40.00)	11 (16.00)	9 (11.00)
A degree of satisfaction	33 (40.00)	21 (16.00)	13 (11.00)
<i>Location of the University:</i> ^c			
Does not apply	27 (20.29)	4 (8.11)	3 (5.58)
A degree of satisfaction	53 (59.70)	28 (23.88)	19 (16.41)
<i>Residence/Living accommodations:</i> ^d			
Does not apply	61 (53.73)	11 (21.49)	18 (14.47)
A degree of satisfaction	19 (26.26)	21 (10.50)	4 (7.22)
<i>Information given you about the University:</i> ^e			
Does not apply	29 (24.47)	4 (9.79)	8 (6.73)
A degree of satisfaction	51 (55.52)	28 (22.26)	14 (15.26)

^aChi-square (2) = 6.224, $p < .0445$.

^bChi-square (2) = 6.302, $p < .0428$.

^cChi-square (2) = 7.366, $p < .0252$.

^dChi-square (2) = 20.737, $p < .00001$.

^eChi-square (2) = 6.484, $p < .0391$.

More divorced students ($f_o = 13$) also reported a degree of satisfaction with the *rules and regulations at the university* than what was expected ($f_e = 11.00$).

There were more single adult students ($f_o = 28$) who reported on the *university's location* than what was expected ($f_e = 23.88$) and also more divorced students ($f_o = 19$) who responded to this aspect than expected ($f_e = 16.41$). Married students, however, reported on the *university's location* less often ($f_o = 53$) than expected ($f_e = 59.70$).

There were more single students ($f_o = 21$) who reported a degree of satisfaction with *residence and living accommodations on campus* than expected ($f_e = 10.51$); while there were fewer married adult students ($f_o = 19$) who had personal experience with *residence and living accommodations* than expected ($f_e = 26.26$), as well as fewer divorced students ($f_o = 4$) who had experience with this aspect than expected ($f_e = 7.22$).

More single students ($f_o = 28$) also reported a degree of satisfaction with *information received about the university before enrolling* than expected ($f_e = 22.26$). There were fewer married students ($f_o = 51$) who reported a degree of satisfaction with this aspect than what was expected ($f_e = 55.52$). The divorced adult student response to the degree of satisfaction with *information received about the university before enrolling* ($f_o = 14$) were slightly less than the expected frequency ($f_e = 15.26$).

Table 62 illustrates that there were more single adult students ($f_o = 24$) than expected ($f_e = 13.61$), and more divorced adult students ($f_o = 11$) than expected ($f_e = 9.35$) who reported a degree of satisfaction

Table 62. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to Does Not Apply or A Degree of Satisfaction with Aspects of Michigan State University by Marital Status (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Extra-Curricular Issues:		Marital Status		
Aspects of Michigan State University		Married	Single	Divorced
<i>Extra-curricular opportunities:^a</i>				
Does not apply	58 (45.97)	8 (10.38)	11 (12.64)	
A degree of satisfaction	22 (34.02)	24 (13.61)	11 (9.35)	
<i>Cultural opportunities:^b</i>				
Does not apply	35 (28.05)	6 (11.22)	6 (7.71)	
A degree of satisfaction	45 (51.94)	26 (20.77)	16 (14.28)	
<i>Social opportunities:^c</i>				
Does not apply	40 (33.18)	5 (13.37)	11 (9.19)	
A degree of satisfaction	40 (46.56)	27 (18.48)	11 (12.80)	
<i>Recreational facilities:^d</i>				
Does not apply	39 (34.62)	7 (13.85)	12 (9.52)	
A degree of satisfaction	41 (45.37)	25 (18.14)	10 (12.47)	
<i>Opportunity to interact with own peer group:^e</i>				
Does not apply	31 (27.46)	5 (10.98)	10 (7.55)	
A degree of satisfaction	49 (52.58)	27 (21.01)	12 (14.44)	

^aChi-square (2) = 21.698, $p < .00001$.

^bChi-square (2) = 6.977, $p < .0305$.

^cChi-square (2) = 11.832, $p < .0027$.

^dChi-square (2) = 8.085, $p < .0176$.

^eChi-square (2) = 6.867, $p < .0323$.

with *extra-curricular opportunities* than expected. There were fewer married adult students ($f_o = 22$) who indicated a degree of satisfaction with *extra-curricular opportunities* than what was expected ($f_e = 34.02$).

More single adult students ($f_o = 26$) than expected ($f_e = 20.77$) and more divorced students ($f_o = 16$) reported a degree of satisfaction with *cultural opportunities* than expected ($f_e = 14.28$). There were less married adult students ($f_o = 45$) who indicated a degree of satisfaction with the university's *cultural opportunities* than expected ($f_e = 51.94$).

Single adult students reported more often ($f_o = 27$) a degree of satisfaction with *social opportunities* than the expected frequency ($f_e = 18.48$). Married students, on the other hand, reported less often ($f_o = 40$) on the issue of *social opportunities* than expected ($f_e = 46.56$).

There were also more single adult students ($f_o = 25$) who reported a degree of satisfaction with the *recreational facilities* on campus than expected ($f_e = 18.14$). Married students reported less often ($f_o = 41$), a degree of satisfaction with the university's *recreational facilities* than what was expected ($f_e = 45.37$). The divorced adult students, as well, reported a degree of satisfaction less often ($f_o = 27$) than expected ($f_e = 12.47$).

The *opportunity to interact with own peer group* was also reported more often ($f_o = 27$) by the single adult students than expected ($f_e = 21.02$). There were fewer married students ($f_o = 49$) than expected ($f_e = 52.28$) and fewer divorced students ($f_o = 12$) who reported a degree of satisfaction with *opportunities to interact with their own peer group* than what was expected ($f_e = 14.44$).

As shown in Table 63, more adult students without children ($f_o = 40$) reported a degree of satisfaction with *extra-curricular opportunities* than what was expected ($f_e = 31.53$); while adult students with children reported a degree of satisfaction less frequently ($f_o = 14$) with this issue than expected ($f_e = 22.46$).

There were more adults without children who reported a degree of satisfaction with *social opportunities* ($f_o = 51$) than was expected ($f_e = 43.21$), while adult students with children cited fewer ($f_o = 23$) degrees of satisfaction than expected ($f_e = 30.78$).

Adult students without children also reported a degree of satisfaction with *recreational facilities* more often ($f_o = 48$) than the expected frequency ($f_e = 41.46$), while adult students with children cited this issue less often ($f_o = 23$) than what was expected ($f_e = 29.53$).

A degree of satisfaction with *residence/living accommodations* was reported more frequently ($f_o = 30$) by adults without children than what was the expected frequency ($f_e = 23.94$); while those with children reported on this issue less often ($f_o = 11$) than what was expected ($f_e = 17.05$).

More adults without children also reported a degree of satisfaction more frequently with *teaching in their major field* ($f_o = 50$) than the expected frequency ($f_e = 43.80$). There were fewer adult students with children ($f_o = 25$) who reported on this issue than expected ($f_e = 31.20$).

Opportunity to interact with their own peer group was reported more frequently by adult students without children ($f_o = 57$) than

Table 63. Chi-Square Analysis of Response to Does Not Apply or A Degree of Satisfaction with Aspects of Michigan State University by Children (expected frequencies in parentheses)

Aspects of Michigan State University	Children	Without Children
<i>Extra-curricular opportunities:^a</i>		
Does not apply	38 (29.53)	33 (41.46)
A degree of satisfaction	14 (22.46)	40 (31.53)
<i>Social opportunities:^b</i>		
Does not apply	29 (21.21)	22 (29.78)
A degree of satisfaction	23 (30.78)	51 (43.21)
<i>Recreational facilities:^c</i>		
Does not apply	29 (22.46)	25 (31.56)
A degree of satisfaction	23 (29.53)	48 (41.46)
<i>Residence/living accommodations:^d</i>		
Does not apply	41 (34.94)	43 (49.05)
A degree of satisfaction	11 (17.05)	30 (23.94)
<i>Teaching in your major field:^e</i>		
Does not apply	27 (20.80)	23 (29.20)
A degree of satisfaction	25 (31.20)	50 (43.80)
<i>Opportunity to interact with own peer group:^f</i>		
Does not apply	24 (16.64)	16 (23.36)
A degree of satisfaction	28 (35.86)	57 (49.64)

^aCorrected chi-square (1) = 8.511, $p < .0035$.

^bCorrected chi-square (1) = 7.233, $p < .0072$.

^cCorrected chi-square (1) = 4.889, $p < .0270$.

^dCorrected chi-square (1) = 4.6111, $p < .0318$.

^eCorrected chi-square (1) = 4.458, $p < .0347$.

^fCorrected chi-square (1) = 7.122, $p < .0076$.

expected ($f_e = 49.64$), and fewer adults with children ($f_o = 28$) reported a degree of satisfaction with the *opportunity to interact with their own peer group* than what was expected ($f_e = 35.86$).

The adult students were asked to select and rank order which three of the satisfaction response options if changed for the better would have encouraged them to stay at the University. The total number of responses were summed and analyzed by the four independent variables. Of the 135 adult students, only 46 rank ordered one response, 28 a second response, and only 18 ranked three responses. Because of this small number, the rank order of the items was ignored and only the frequency of each response was examined.

Table 64 illustrates results of the sex variable in the frequency response options reported for improvement.

As illustrated in Table 64, a total of seventeen adult students (eight men and nine women) reported an improvement in the scheduling of classes would have encouraged them to stay at the University. Ten students (five men and five women) reported a change in faculty attitude; and six adult students (three men and three women) reported a change in academic and advising services would have encouraged them to remain at the University.

Table 65 shows the results of the marital status variable in the response options reported for improvement.

As can be seen in Table 65, the response option most often reported by married ($n = 8$), single ($n = 3$), divorced ($n = 5$) adult students which if changed for the better, would have encouraged them to

Table 64. Frequency of Satisfaction Response Options Reported for Improvement by Sex (rank order from most to least)

Satisfaction Response Options	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Scheduling of classes	9	9	17
Attitude of faculty	5	5	10
Cost of attending the university	6	3	9
Getting into desired classes	2	4	6
Academic and advising services	3	3	6
Financial aid opportunities	2	3	5
Quality of faculty	4	1	5
Course content in major field	2	2	4
Attitude of administrative staff	1	3	4
Enrollment size	1	2	3
Rules and regulations at the university . .	1	2	3
Teaching in my major field	2	1	3
Attitude of my advisor	1	1	2
Employment opportunities	1	1	2
Location of the university	1	1	2
Library services	-	1	1
Extra-curricular opportunities	-	1	1
Recreational facilities	-	1	1
Grading system	-	1	1
Counseling/guidance services	-	1	1
Amount of contact with instructors	1	-	1
Relevance of your major field to your career goals	-	1	1
Information given you about the university before enrolling	-	1	1
Quality of students	1	-	1
University in general	-	1	1
Attitude of clerical staff toward me as a student	-	1	1

Table 65. Frequency of Satisfaction Response Options Reported for Improvement by Marital Status (rank order from most often to least)

Satisfaction Response Option	Frequency			
	Married	Single	Divorced	Total
Scheduling of classes	8	3	5	16
Attitude of faculty	8	2	-	10
Cost of attending the university .	7	-	1	8
Getting into desired classes . . .	3	1	2	6
Academic and advising services . .	3	3	-	6
Financial aid opportunities . . .	3	2	-	5
Quality of faculty	3	2	-	5
Course content in major field . .	3	1	-	4
Attitude of administrative staff .	2	2	-	4
Enrollment size	2	-	1	3
Rules and regulations at the university	-	1	2	3
Teaching in my major field	2	1	-	3
Attitude of my advisor	2	-	-	2
Employment opportunities	1	1	-	2
Location of the university	1	1	-	2
Library services	-	1	-	1
Extra-curricular opportunities . .	-	-	1	1
Recreational facilities	1	-	-	1
Grading system	1	-	-	1
Counseling/guidance services . . .	1	-	-	1
Amount of contact with instructors	1	-	-	1
Relevance of your major field to your career goals	-	1	-	1
Information given you about the university before enrolling . .	1	-	-	1
Quality of students	-	1	-	1
University in general	1	-	-	1
Attitude of clerical staff toward me as a student	1	-	-	1

stay at the university was *scheduling of classes*. A change in *faculty attitude* was the second most reported response option checked. Closer examination reveals, however, that a greater number of adult students who reported a change in *faculty attitude* were married ($n = 8$) and two were single. There were no divorced students who checked this option. While seven married students and one divorced student indicated a change in the *cost of attending the university* would have encouraged them to stay, this was not a factor reported by single students.

The results for the age group variable are shown in Table 66.

As can be seen in Table 66, a change for *better class scheduling* was reported almost equally by the majority of students in both age groups (eight in 26-30 years and nine in 31+ years). A change in *faculty attitude* was reported by ten of the adult students in the two age groups (six in 26-30 years and four in 31+ years) as the second most often reported response option. The third response item most often reported ($n = 8$) was *cost of attending the university*. It is interesting to note that while eight adults in 26-30 years reported this response option, it was reported by only one adult in 31+ age group.

The results of children variable in the number of response options reported for improvement are shown in Table 67.

As shown in Table 66, the response option most often reported that would have encouraged them to stay if changed for the better, by child variable, was *scheduling of classes*. There were fifteen adult students who selected this factor (nine adult students with children and six without children). The next factor most often selected was a

Table 66. Frequency of Satisfaction Response Options Reported for Improvement by Age Group (rank order from most often to least)

Satisfaction Response Option	Frequency		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	Total
Scheduling of classes	8	9	17
Attitude of faculty	6	4	10
Cost of attending the university . . .	8	1	9
Getting into desired classes	1	5	6
Academic and advising services	5	1	6
Financial aid opportunities	4	1	5
Quality of faculty	4	1	5
Course content in major field	2	2	4
Attitude of administrative staff . . .	4	-	4
Enrollment size	3	-	3
Rules and regulations at the university	1	2	3
Teaching in my major field	3	-	3
Attitude of my advisor	2	-	2
Employment opportunities	-	2	2
Location of the university	1	1	2
Library services	1	-	1
Extra-curricular opportunities	-	1	1
Recreational facilities	1	-	1
Grading system	-	1	1
Counseling/guidance services	1	-	1
Amount of contact with instructors . .	1	-	1
Relevance of your major field to your goals	1	-	1
Information given you about the university before enrolling	1	-	1
Quality of students	1	-	1
University in general	1	-	1
Attitude of clerical staff toward me as a student	1	-	1

Table 67. Frequency of Satisfaction Response Options Reported for Improvement by Children (rank order from most often to least)

Satisfaction Response Options	Frequency		
	Children	Without Children	Total
Scheduling of classes	9	6	15
Attitude of faculty	5	5	10
Cost of attending the university .	4	4	8
Academic and advising services . .	4	2	6
Getting into desired classes . . .	4	1	5
Financial aid opportunities	1	4	5
Quality of faculty	1	5	6
Course content in major field . .	1	3	4
Attitude of administrative staff	1	3	4
Enrollment size	-	3	3
Rules and regulations at the university	1	2	3
Teaching in my major field	-	3	3
Attitude of my advisor	2	-	2
Employment opportunities	1	1	2
Location of the university	-	2	2
Quality of students	1	1	2
Library services	-	1	1
Extra curricular opportunities . .	1	-	1
Recreational facilities	-	1	1
Grading system	1	-	1
Counseling/guidance services . . .	1	-	1
Amount of contact with instructors	1	-	1
Relevance of your major field to your career goals	-	1	1
Information given you about the university before enrolling . .	1	-	1

change in *attitude of the faculty*. Of the ten adult students who selected this response option, five had children and five did not.

Analysis of Future Plans

Students were also asked to report their plans for the future. From a list of eight response options listed under "Future Plans," they were to select as many of the responses which were applicable. Because of the sparsity of response in three of the option categories (*traveling, caring for home and/or family, and other*), it was decided to collapse them with the category labeled *other*. The response for each of these five categories were summed and frequencies calculated for each of the four independent variables. The results of the sex variable are shown in Table 68.

Table 68. Frequency of Student Responses as to Future Plans by Sex Variable (percentages are presented as percent of total number of adult students, N = 135)

Future Plans	Frequency		
	Male	Female	Total
Plan to return to MSU next term	28 (20.7%)	32 (23.7%)	60 (44.4%)
Plan to return to MSU within the next year	18 (13.3%)	11 (8.1%)	29 (21.5%)
Plan to attend another university	7 (5.2%)	7 (5.2%)	14 (10.4%)
Looking for a job	4 (3.0%)	3 (2.2%)	7 (5.2%)
Working in a job	8 (5.9%)	4 (3.0%)	12 (8.9%)
Other	6 (4.4%)	4 (3.0%)	10 (7.4%)
No response	3 (2.2%)	- --	3 (2.2%)
Total	74 (54.8%)	61 (45.2%)	135 (100%)

As shown in Table 68, the majority of men ($n = 28$) and women ($n = 32$) reported that they *planned to return to Michigan State University next term*. Eighteen men and eleven women reported that they were *planning to return to Michigan State University within the next year*. It is interesting to note, however, that there were almost twice as many men as women who selected this response category. Fourteen adult students, equally divided by the sex variable, reported that they *planned to attend another university*.

The results of frequency of response of future plans by marital status are reported in Table 69.

As can be seen in Table 69, the majority of married students reported their future plans to be: (1) *return to Michigan State University next term* ($n = 30$) and (2) *return to Michigan State University within the next year* ($n = 21$).

The majority of single adult students ($n = 17$) reported *returning to Michigan State University next term*. It is interesting to note, however, that the second most often selected response option by single students was to *attend another term* ($n = 5$). The majority of divorced students ($n = 12$) reported that they *planned to return to Michigan State University next term* and to *return to Michigan State University within the next year* ($n = 6$).

The results of the adult students' future plans by the children variable are presented in Table 70.

Table 69. Frequency of Student Responses as to Future Plans by Marital Status (percentages are presented as percent of total number of adult students, N = 134)

Future Plans	Frequency			
	Married	Single	Divorced	Total
Plan to return to MSU next term	30 (22.4%)	17 (12.7%)	12 (9.0%)	59 (44.0%)
Plan to return to MSU within the next year	21 (15.7%)	2 (1.5%)	6 (4.5%)	29 (21.6%)
Plan to attend another university	9 (6.7%)	5 (3.7%)	-- --	14 (10.4%)
Looking for a job	3 (3.2%)	3 (3.2%)	1 (0.7%)	7 (5.2%)
Working in a job	9 (6.7%)	2 (1.5%)	1 (0.7%)	12 (9.0%)
Other	5 (3.7%)	3 (2.2%)	2 (1.5%)	10 (7.4%)
No response	3 (2.2%)	-- --	-- --	3 (2.2%)
Total	80 (59.7%)	32 (23.9%)	22 (16.4%)	134 (100.0%)

Note: One adult student failed to indicate marital status, therefore N = 134.

Table 70. Frequency of Student Responses as to Future Plans by Children Variable (percentages are presented as percent of total number of adult students, N = 125)

Future Plans	Frequency		
	Children	Without Children	Total
Plan to return to MSU next term	21 (16.8%)	35 (28.0%)	56 (44.8%)
Plan to return to MSU within the next year	14 (11.2%)	12 (9.6%)	26 (20.8%)
Plan to attend another university	6 (4.8%)	7 (5.6%)	13 (10.4%)
Looking for a job	2 (1.6%)	5 (4.0%)	7 (5.6%)
Working in a job	3 (2.4%)	8 (6.4%)	11 (8.8%)
Other	5 (4.0%)	5 (4.0%)	10 (8.0%)
No reponse	<u>1 (0.8%)</u>	<u>1 (0.8%)</u>	<u>2 (1.6%)</u>
Total	52 (41.6%)	73 (58.4%)	125 (100.0%)

Note: Ten adult students did not respond to children/no children.

As Table 70 illustrates, the majority of the adult students with and without children (n = 56) reported that they *planned to return to Michigan State University next term*. Fourteen adult students with children and twelve adults without children reported that they *planned to return to Michigan State University within the next year*. Closer examination reveals that there were more adults without children (n = 35) who reported that they *planned to return to Michigan State University next term* than those with children (n = 21).

The results of the age group variable are shown in Table 71.

Table 71. Frequency of Student Responses as to Future Plans by Age Group (percentages are presented as percent of total number of adult students, N = 135)

Future Plans	Frequency		
	26-30 Years	31+ Years	Total
Plan to return to MSU next term	30 (22.2%)	30 (22.2%)	60 (44.4%)
Plan to return to MSU within the next year	15 (11.1%)	14 (10.4%)	29 (21.5%)
Plan to attend another university	10 (7.4%)	4 (3.0%)	14 (10.4%)
Looking for a job	4 (3.0%)	3 (2.2%)	7 (5.2%)
Working in a job	7 (5.2%)	5 (3.7%)	12 (8.9%)
Other	7 (5.2%)	3 (2.2%)	10 (7.4%)
No response	<u>2 (1.5%)</u>	<u>1 (0.7%)</u>	<u>3 (2.2%)</u>
Total	75 (55.6%)	60 (44.4%)	135 (100.0%)

As can be seen from Table 71, the majority of adult students in the 26-30 age group (n = 30) and an equal number in the 31+ age group (n = 30) reported that they *planned to return to Michigan State University next term*. Almost equally divided by both age groups, was the second most often selected response option, *plan to return to Michigan State University within the next year* (fifteen in the 26-30 age group and fourteen in the 31+ age group).

Reasons Given for Withdrawal and Efforts Taken
to Avoid the Need to Withdraw by Adult
Student Interviewees

This part of the results chapter is concerned with the twenty-three interviews this researcher conducted with a subsample of adult students who withdrew fall term 1979. The purpose of the interview was to supplement the information derived from the questionnaire. An interview guide was developed to assure that the same topics would be covered with each interviewee. The topics covered were: (1) reasons for withdrawal from the university; (2) steps taken, if any, by the adult student to avoid the need to withdraw; and (3) any suggested intervention strategies given by the adult student, which the university might have taken which would have allowed the student to complete the term.

Information derived from the twenty-three interviews was then compiled into three tables covering the topic areas of: reasons for withdrawal; steps taken to avoid withdrawal; and suggested intervention strategies.

The reasons given for withdrawal by the adult student interviewees were each identified by a combination of the independent variables (sex, age group, marital status, children) and are shown in Table 72.

As can be seen from Table 72, five of the thirteen adult women students interviewed who withdrew, did so for academic reasons; two for financial reasons, two for employment reasons, and four for personal reasons. As a point of interest, three of the 31+ divorced women with children cited academic reasons for withdrawal, and three of the 31+ married women with children cited personal reasons for withdrawal. There were no multiple reasons given for men in the 31+ age group.

Four of the ten male adult students interviewed, withdrew for academic reasons; three for employment reasons; and three for personal reasons. No adult male cited financial reasons for withdrawing.

Steps taken by adult student interviewees to avoid the need to withdraw are shown in Table 73.

As can be seen from Table 73, eleven of the thirteen women interviewees made some attempt to avoid the need to withdraw; one was required to withdraw by her doctor and one simply decided on her own. Four of the ten adult male interviewees, on the other hand, made no effort to avoid withdrawal; two others confirmed their decision to withdraw with their spouses; and three made some attempt to avoid withdrawal.

Intervention techniques and suggestions made by the interviewees are shown in Table 74.

Table 72. Reasons Given for Withdrawal by Adult Student Interviewees

Male	Female
<u>Academic Reasons:</u>	<u>Academic Reasons:</u>
<u>26-30 Years, Divorced, Child Variable Unknown</u>	<u>26-30 Years, Single, No Child</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need more time for self--need a break from academics. • No motivation. Looking for full-time employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The class schedule was switched. Also financial mixup caused me to find work.
<u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u>	<u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfaction with course content. Class did not meet course description. Health was a secondary factor. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dissatisfied with professor's teaching techniques.
<u>31+ Years, Married, No Child</u>	<u>31+ Years, Divorced, Child</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of interest in academic program. Don't like not being in the job market. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disinterest in course content. Time factor with job and pressure with family. • I was not adequately prepared for the course since I had taken the prerequisite many years ago. • Course scheduling conflict.
<u>Employment Reasons:</u>	<u>Employment Reasons:</u>
<u>26-30 Years, Married, Child</u>	<u>26-30 Years, Single, No Child</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work schedule did not allow to attend but one session. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job conflict--schedule changed after I registered for class. Frightened that this would cause me to miss classes and I didn't want to fail the course.
<u>31+ Years, Married, No Child</u>	<u>31+ Years, Divorced, No Child</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job conflict/time commitments. Work schedule made me miss first three weeks of class as I was out of town. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More work responsibilities have been added. Too time consuming coming on campus and then trying to find parking. Also I have had some health problems which caused difficulty in doing well both at school and work.
<u>31+ Years, Single, Child Variable Unknown</u>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time conflict with job after I registered. 	
<u>Financial Reasons:</u>	<u>Financial Reasons:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non reported. 	
<u>Personal Reasons:</u>	<u>Financial Reasons:</u>
<u>26-30 Years, Married, No Child</u>	<u>26-30 Years, Divorced, No Child</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal commitments. Going into business venture and lack time for studies. Also recent home purchase increased home responsibilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employer changed my job status to half time and I had to find other half-time employment. Expense of course supplies--\$60.00 for testing kit.
<u>26-30 Years, Single, No Child</u>	<u>Personal Reasons:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of personal problems caused difficulty in adjusting to school. Also lacked level of motivation to do course work and financial situation necessitated my return to full-time employment. 	<u>26-30 Years, Married, Child</u>
<u>30+ Years, Married, Child</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possibility of moving out of the area because of my husband's position. However, I would have probably continued to be enrolled but was charged out-of-state tuition because I have been here only 10 months--in spite of owning my own home and I feel this isn't justified.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems in family communication. Lack of time for family and studies. Studies suffered. Wife not satisfied. This has been the situation for the past 2½ years in school and it has reached a breaking point. 	<u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family illness and parental death. Not a convenient time to pursue studies. • Personal illness. • Not dependable child care.

Table 73. Steps Taken by Adult Student Interviewees to Avoid Withdrawing

Male	Female
<p><u>26-30 Years, Single, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applied for financial aid before the start of the term. <p><u>26-30 Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion with wife. Looked at my present situation and found that it was not realistic for me to attend at this time. <p><u>26-30 Years, Married, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussed demands of time commitment with wife and we came to the decision together in order not to jeopardize GPA. <p><u>26-30 Years, Divorced, Child Variable Unknown</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. • None--because I hadn't been studying and wasn't prepared. I'm working nights. <p><u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looked at other alternatives. Regarded the possibility of dropping all but one course. Looked for work study position but then decided that would not have helped family finances. • Attempted to work out conflicts. Course was not what I anticipated or as stated in the catalog. • None. <p><u>31+ Years, Married, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None--decision within self. <p><u>31+ Years, Single, Child Variable Unknown</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tried to get out of work assignment. 	<p><u>26-30 Years, Single, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tried to get back on the afternoon shift. • Consulted with my advisor to make sure I understood what the consequences of withdrawing would be. • Tried to check with academic counselor in Erickson but the office was closed in the evening during registration. Called the next morning and was informed advisor was on sabbatical and there was no one handling the advisor's student load. Other courses available would not fit into my working schedule. <p><u>26-30 Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempted to clear in-state tuition issue. <p><u>26-30 Years, Divorced, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempted to find full-time evening employment. <p><u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Went to discuss concern with the professor and advisor. They were not very responsive. • Attempted to keep up with classes at home but found it hard to do because of the inflexibility of the instructor. • Attempted to find better child care facilities. • None. Decision made by my doctor. <p><u>31+ Years, Divorced, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Went to doctor regarding health problem. Also talked with my advisor to discuss possible change in direction of studies in another field in which there are evening classes available. <p><u>31+ Years, Divorced, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tried to get into another section of the course. • Tried to see if I could work through math and physics at the same time and concluded I couldn't devote that much time. • Thought through the decision on my own. Feel decision is a good one because classes I was taking this term didn't have value.

Table 74. Intervention Techniques and Suggestions Offered by Adult Student Interviewees

Male	Female
<p><u>26-30 Years, Single, Child Variable Unknown</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I should have received financial aid assistance. I also needed prior advisement about study techniques because I haven't been very successful in school. When I first entered college I was advised to take courses for which I didn't have the academic background. This led to bad grades. <p><u>26-30 Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggest more late afternoon courses. Need for more variety of evening courses and more flexibility and available options to adult students. There is a lack of counseling available for the older married student. I have never seen a brochure showing how to plan one's academic program for the married student. My adviser's emphasis is first on the degree. I have never had any counseling on how to fit academic schedule into one's life schedule--a realistic approach. If that had been available I would have been better able to make educational plans and I would not be in my present bind. <p><u>26-30 Years, Married, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None--outside of university concern. Degree is secondary priority--family responsibilities are first. Needed time off for "mental" health. It is extremely difficult to be a student and work at the same time. Striving to become full time by 1980. <p><u>26-30 Years, Divorced, Child Variable Unknown</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None--This was a personal decision. My primary reason is motivation. I had already made my mind up. • None--The College of Human Medicine encourages taking leave for self growth. Withdrew at my own choice for personal development. • Offer more evening classes for day employed students in Criminal Justice Department. <p><u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None--Decision outside of the university. Lack of time for family which builds up tension with family. I never see my wife. More financial aid would be helpful but that doesn't solve family concerns. • More evening or early morning classes. Mid-afternoon classes are not in keeping with Lifelong Education. • Non-specifically--It was a combination of work, school, and family concerns. • Need better orientation for the adult students to discuss possible conflicts in attending school with children and family concerns. Availability of counseling for adult students. Availability of financial aid for the part-time student. Better advisement about what to expect when enrolling at MSU when one is not a typical student. 	<p><u>26-30 Years, Single, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow longer add period--10 days of classes instead of 5 so that I could have avoided a scheduling conflict. • No switching of class schedules without prior notification--or at least have information available at registration. My class was changed from evening to daytime and I did not find out about the change until I went to my Thursday night class! • As an adult student, I feel out of place at times. Activities are geared toward the 18-22 year old and not anything for adults. There appears to be a lack of child care facilities which causes some parents to bring their children to class which creates some disturbance. I would like to suggest special drop and add period for evening students who work. I had to take an afternoon off from teaching to take care of my problem. Also I would like to suggest that the regional centers publish their course offerings sooner so that students could know what courses will be available so that if none fit their needs they could then pre-enroll on campus. <p><u>26-30 Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needed to be given in-state tuition. <p><u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More flexibility in course assignments and attendance for adult students. • Professors should be evaluated. University should take heed of student evaluations of teaching faculty. Others (students) have expressed the same concerns. Had I had any feedback about this professor I would not have signed up for the class. • Unsure--perhaps more evening courses in my major. • Advisor discouraged me from student teaching because of my young child rather than to suggest possible alternatives. • Better information on day care centers at MSU. I was also misled about length of residency requirement from my advisor. • I have not been exposed to other students in my age group. I don't know any adult student in my major field other than my advisor with whom I consult. Suggest a center in which adults could meet other adults and discuss common concerns. Parking is a crucial problem in the day, and the scheduling time of classes is a problem if employed. • There is a need for more undergraduate literature courses in the evening. I already have a M.A. and would like to take courses for enrichment. Need more parking facilities for adults over 40 rather than Y lot. • The faculty and university place the older adult in the same category as 18-22 year olds and when I asked for an exception because of a family problem, they think you aren't motivated. Adults are treated as children--something adults don't need. There is mandatory attendance. Faculty are accommodating but only within a prescribed structure and will not make any exceptions beyond this. I would like the availability of more independent studies. I feel a need to interact with own peers. Some of this was achieved with M. Erickson at the undergraduate level--but there is none at the graduate level.

Table 74--Continued

Male	Female
<p><u>31+ Years, Married, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More available evening courses. I have been working toward a B.A. since 1971 and this was my first term back since then due to lack of evening courses in my major. Thought about keeping one of my courses instead of withdrawing but felt the cost of transportation and time was not worth the effort as I had planned my schedule to take two courses in sequence. • Lots of area in the university are run with the 18-22 year-old image, but for adults this image is to their disadvantage. • The registration process for Lifelong Education lacked signs designating location of Lifelong Education table. I first went to regular registration and was sent to Lifelong Education. Felt very frustrated. Some suggestions: Mail registration, grant permission to early register; have all Lifelong Education students meet at one designated area and have "runners" stand in lines to take care of registration. It took me from 7:00 p.m. until 9:45 to register and I didn't have any complications. Situation was not conducive to want to sign up again. Other universities appear to be more adaptable to part-time students and much more flexible. <p><u>31+ Years, Married, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise students what to expect when enrolling at MSU. Commuting daily from Flint does not allow for involvement in campus activities. I don't feel a part of the university community. • Identify adult students prior to entering the university through a circular letter which discusses some of the problems they may encounter in their return to campus, and how to handle problems and/or where to get assistance. There is need for counseling services geared toward the adult. There is need to schedule a broader range of courses. This course was only scheduled late in the day--there were none in the early morning hours. 	<p><u>31+ Years, Divorced, No Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More evening courses. Parking improvements for commuters. • Seems that the university doesn't want part-time students. The university is designed for full-time on-campus students even in the graduate department. There is no encouragement given to the part-time student. There are no organizations available for peer interaction. I don't know who my peers are--nor are there any meeting places designed for part-time students. Registration procedures should be streamlined to assist the part-time working student. This also causes difficulty in getting appointment to one's advisor. And because of working and being part-time, there is no interaction with the academic department and one doesn't "feel" a part of the graduate department. <p><u>31+ Years, Divorced, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have many personal problems--particularly as a single parent (ADC, divorced, teenage children). Counseling center is not geared to the older student and all of the problems of the single parent. Nobody at the university could help. I was offered group therapy with younger students. I needed specific help in coping with an immediate problem and wasn't interested in group therapy with younger students. I'm in an "adult world" and want to be treated as such. The lack of support from the counseling center was a big disappointment to me. There is a problem of teen-age children in University Village--no programs geared toward them or the single parent and feel this is an area the university should be concerned about. <p><u>31+ Years, Divorced, Child</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I had difficulty getting information on Lifelong Education. Publicity is not the best. The administration seems unaware of it. I was not pleased with my experience in getting back into credit courses. I had difficulty in obtaining guidance in the direction I should take. Suggest that there should be more guidance facilities for adult women in changing or developing careers. • The instructor could have accepted me in his class because of the scheduling conflict with my teaching schedule. • Have textbooks available. Text for course was not available until three weeks after course started and since it was self-paced, I could not know the course was too difficult. It put me three weeks behind before I started the course. • The course I wanted to take and the one which I felt I was qualified to handle, was full. There was no one available with whom I could discuss alternatives. The person at Lifelong Education registration didn't know about any of the courses. There are not enough evening and late afternoon courses available for those who work. There is a lack of parking facilities for those enrolled in late afternoon classes.

It can be noted from Table 73 that the female adult students gave substantially more suggestions and intervention strategies than did the male adult students.

Summary

The Chi-Square Test was utilized in analyzing the data to determine any statistical significance at the .05 level of significance for the independent demographic variables: sex, age group, marital status, and children, and the dependent variables listed in the questionnaire under "Reasons Why a Student Might Leave College" and "Degree of Satisfaction."

Shown to be significantly different under "Academic Reasons" for withdrawal were *needed a temporary break from studies* by age group and by children, and *unsure of major* and *lack of interest* by children.

Under "Employment Reasons" listed for withdrawal, *conflict between job and studies* was shown to be significantly different by children.

Shown to be significantly different by age group and by marital status was *not enough money to go to school* listed under "Financial Reasons" for withdrawing.

Under "Personal Reasons" for withdrawing, *home responsibilities were too great* was shown to be significantly different by marital status and *personal illness* by children.

The number of statements the adult students selected as reasons for withdrawal were examined next and analyzed by the four independent variables. None of the independent variables were shown to differ

significantly for the number of academic reasons checked. Only the children variable was shown to be significantly related under the number of employment reasons checked. Shown to be significantly related under the number of financial reasons checked was the marital status variable; for personal reasons checked, there were no independent variables which were significant.

Examined next were the responses of the adult students as to their degree of satisfaction with Michigan State University. Found to be significantly different by the sex variable were *academic advising services* and *attitude of clerical staff toward me as a student*.

Cost of attending the university and the *grading system* were found to be significantly related to marital status.

By the age group variable, *cost of attending the university* was shown to differ significantly.

The opportunity to interact with own peer group and *quality of faculty* were shown to be significantly different by the children variable.

The researcher also examined any differences which might exist between those adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the thirty-one listed aspects of Michigan State University and then compared these responses with those labeled "Does Not Apply." The results of the chi-square analysis by sex showed no significant differences.

Financial aid opportunities, *social opportunities*, and *recreational facilities* were shown to be significantly different by the age group variable.

There were fifteen significant differences reported by the marital status variable. These were: *grading system, course content in your major field, attitude of faculty toward me as a student, intellectual stimulation, quality of students, enrollment size, rules and regulations at the university, residence/living accommodations, information given you about the university, location of the university, extra-curricular opportunities, cultural opportunities, social opportunities, recreational facilities, and opportunity to interact with own peer group.*

Aspects of the university reported to be significantly different by the children variable were: *extra-curricular opportunities, social opportunities, recreational facilities, residence/living accommodations, teaching in your major field, and opportunity to interact with own peer group.*

The adult students were also requested to select and rank order three of the satisfaction response options which would have encouraged them to remain at the university, if changed for the better. The total number of responses were summed and analyzed by the four independent variables. The options most often reported by the adult students, in order of priority, were: *scheduling of classes, attitude of faculty, and cost of attending the university.*

The adult students' plans for the future were also examined and frequencies calculated for each of the independent variables. *Plan to return to Michigan State University next term* was the response option most frequently reported.

In addition, the researcher conducted twenty-three interviews with a subsample of the adult students in the study. The purpose for the interviews was to supplement the information derived from the questionnaire. Topics covered were: reasons for withdrawing, the steps the adults took to avoid the need to withdraw, and what intervention strategies the university could have taken which would have allowed them to complete the term.

Five of the thirteen women interviewed, said they withdrew for academic reasons, two for financial reasons, and four for personal reasons. Four of the ten men interviewed said they did so for academic reasons, three for employment reasons, and three for personal reasons. Eleven of the thirteen women reported they made some attempt to avoid withdrawing but only three out of the ten men reported they made any attempt. Substantially more women interviewees offered suggestions for intervention strategies than did the male interviewees.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Summary

Significance of the Study

There is evidence to support that the traditional age college student population is on the decline. A 1977 report of the Michigan Department of Education task force stated that Michigan's public secondary schools (grades 7-12) will lose one-fifth of their enrollment during the decade 1975-1984.

This projected decline is of particular importance to Michigan State University. An Annual Evaluation Report used for projecting enrollments at Michigan State University, prepared by the Office of Institutional Research (1979), reported that 90 percent of Michigan State University's first time undergraduate enrollments come directly from Michigan high schools. By 1990, the report continues, the University will experience a 30 percent loss of first time undergraduates if the University's share of the twelfth grade enrollment pool remained the same.

To counteract this decline of full-time 18-22 year old student enrollment, there is need to attract the adult student to the University to help sustain it; however, the current adult withdrawal rate would suggest that we need better methods of retention.

The total fall term enrollment at Michigan State University was 44,756 and of this number 7,547 (16.8%) were adult students. During fall term a total of 556 students withdrew from the University; 382 (68.71%) were traditional age students and 174 (31.29%) were adult students.

Purpose of the Study

The major purpose of the study was to identify the adult student population over 25 years of age, full and part-time, graduate and undergraduate, who voluntarily withdrew from Michigan State University within the first eight weeks of fall term 1979, giving particular attention to the students' reasons for withdrawal and their degree of satisfaction with varying aspects of the university community. In addition, the researcher attempted to ascertain which of the reasons given for withdrawal by the adult students might be amenable to remedial action by the University. Utilizing this data the researcher sought to develop intervention strategies which the University might undertake to retain a higher percentage of the adult student population.

Approximately 150 adult students were sampled for the study. This sample size was based on data obtained by the researcher during the academic year 1976-77 which suggested that a sample of this size was available at Michigan State University.

The total number of adult students obtained for this study was 174. Each of these students were given or sent a questionnaire. Of the 174 distributed, 135 were returned, resulting in a 77.5 percent response rate. The total sample consisted of 135 adult students: 74 adult male students (54.81%) and 61 adult female students (45.19%).

Specifically, the researcher identified:

1. The characteristics of the adult students who voluntarily withdrew within the first eight weeks of fall term 1979.
2. What factors contributed to their decision to withdraw.
3. Which of these factors were university related.
4. The number and percentage of adult students who leave for reasons amenable to remedial action by the university.
5. The number and percentage of adult students who leave for reasons which are not amenable to remedial action by the university.
6. Intervention strategies which Michigan State University might take to retain a higher percentage of its adult student body.

Methodology

During fall term 1979, all adult students who voluntarily withdrew at the Student Withdrawal Office were handed questionnaires to complete in addition to the "Withdrawal Application" and "Information Sheet" normally given to them. A questionnaire was also mailed to all adult students who withdrew through correspondence and to those adult students whose names appeared on a list supplied by the Registrar's Office as having dropped all their courses during the University's "drop" period. In addition, this researcher interviewed approximately every fourth adult student who withdrew at the Withdrawal Office.

A questionnaire developed by the National Center for Higher Education Management Systems (NCHEMS) was examined and selected as a

model for the questionnaire used in this study. Some modifications to the NCHEMS questionnaire were necessary to adapt it to a study of the within term withdrawal of adult students. These modifications were based on information derived from the literature reviewed, suggestions made by the faculty of the Department of Higher Education and Institute for Research on Teaching at Michigan State University, and from information gathered during exit interviews with students who voluntarily withdrew during this researcher's eight years of work in the Office of Student Withdrawals at Michigan State University.

The first part of the questionnaire consisted of fifteen items which covered demographic and academic background information of the adult student respondents. The remainder of the questionnaire was divided into four general categories:

1. Reasons for Entering and Re-entering College.

From the fourteen response options listed, students were asked to check all which applied to them when they entered college, and, if applicable, when they re-entered college.

2. Reasons for Withdrawing from Michigan State University.

Thirty-three response options were listed under four sub-categories: academic, employment, financial, and personal circumstances. The students were asked to rate the response options using the following scale:

Major reason	= 1
Moderate reason	= 2
Minor reason	= 3
Not a reason	= 4

3. Degree of Satisfaction with Varying Aspects of Michigan State University. Students were asked to rate thirty-one response options using the following scale:

Much	= 1
Moderate	= 2
Little	= 3
None	= 4
Does not apply	= 5

4. Future Plans. Students were asked to check any of the eight response options listed.

Data analysis techniques were performed on the Michigan State University Cyber 750 computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) System. Descriptive data (frequencies and percentage frequencies) were compiled on all questionnaire items using sub-program frequencies.

The Chi-Square Test was utilized in analyzing the data to determine any statistically significant relationships between the independent demographic variables (sex, age group, marital status, and children) and the dependent variables listed under the reasons for withdrawal and degree of satisfaction. For all testing the .05 level of significance was adopted as a criterion.

An interview guide was developed in order to assure that the same topics would be covered in each interview and to minimize any unintended bias. The general areas covered were:

1. Reasons for withdrawing from the University. This question was asked again, although it appeared in the questionnaire, in order to allow students to state their reasons for

withdrawing in their own words and to give them an opportunity to discuss their own situation face to face.

2. Steps which the student might have taken to avoid the need to withdraw.
3. Any intervention strategies which the University might have taken which then would have allowed the student to complete the term.

The interview guide served as a directional device rather than as a detailed questionnaire. Each interview guide was numerically coded to correspond to the questionnaire which had been completed by the student. Twenty-three adult students were interviewed by the researcher.

Findings and Discussion

The findings of the study are summarized and discussed under the following areas:

1. Characteristics of the adult students who voluntarily withdrew from the university.
2. Factors which contributed to the adult students' decisions to withdraw.
3. University related factors which contributed to the withdrawal of the adult students.
4. The number and percentage of adult students who leave for reasons amenable to remedial action by the university.
5. The number and percentage of adult students who leave for reasons not amenable to remedial action by the university.

6. Intervention strategies which Michigan State University might take to retain a higher percentage of its adult student body.

Characteristics of the Adult Students
Who Voluntarily Withdrew Fall Term
1979, from Michigan State University

Sex. Out of the 135 adult students in the study, 61 (45.19%) were women and 74 (54.81%) were men. Adult women students comprised only 42.80 percent of the total adult student population fall term; thus, it should be noted that proportionately more women (45.19%) withdrew than were represented in the total population (42.80%); conversely, fewer men withdrew (54.81%) than were represented in the total population (57.20%). This finding supports previous research findings of Ulmer and Verner (1963), Verner and Davies (1964), and Astin (1975). Astin reported that older students, particularly older women, were more likely to withdraw than those of traditional age.

Marital status. While the majority of the adult students (n = 80) were married, more men (n = 51) than women (n = 29) were married; and more women (n = 16) than men (n = 6) were divorced. Single students were equally divided by men (n = 16) and women (n = 16).

Age group. The majority of adult students in the study who withdrew were between the ages of 26-30 years. Thirty-five out of sixty-one adult women students and forty out of seventy-four adult male students were in this age group. This finding supports Boshier's study (1973) in which he reported that participants 20-30 years of age dropped out more than older participants.

Age when first enrolled. The majority of the adult students first enrolled in college between the ages of 16-19 years. A number of adult male students also reported that they had enrolled initially between the ages of 20-24 years, which is likely reflective of prior military service.

Children/no children. Overall, married students were almost equally divided as to whether they did or did not have children. When the variable children/no children was examined in relation to sex and age group, it was found that married and divorced women over 30 years of age had substantially more children. This trend is commensurate with the emerging societal value systems that have evolved between these two age groups. It should also be noted that ten of the adult students in the study failed to respond to the question regarding children. Because of this decrease (7.4%) in the total number of adults available for descriptive and statistical analysis purposes, children/no children was not used as an independent variable in the first part of this study.

Academic standing. The majority of the adult students were either working toward their bachelor's ($n = 45$) or master's ($n = 35$) degrees. Married students were almost equally divided as to whether they were pursuing bachelor's or master's degrees; however, this was not the case for single and divorced adult students. Almost twice as many single and divorced adult students ($n = 20$) reported working toward their bachelor's than toward their master's degree ($n = 11$).

College and major. Most of the adult students who withdrew were enrolled in the College of Social Science (n = 28) or in the College of Education (n = 25). Of those adult students who withdrew from the College of Education, ten were classified under "Special Programs," and the remainder in various other majors in the college. It should be noted that of the number of adult students enrolled under "Special Programs," most (n = 16) were married. Adult students from the College of Social Science were more evenly distributed among the majors of the college.

Full/part-time enrollment. Of the 130 adult students who indicated their enrollment status, the majority were enrolled on a part-time basis (n = 85). There were more married and divorced students enrolled part-time than were enrolled full-time (n = 27). This difference is not evident for the single adult students as they were more equally divided in their enrollment status.

GPA. The majority of the adult students reported GPA above 2.5. Although there were only nine adult students who reported that they were currently on academic probation, more single adult students reported prior academic probation than did the married or divorced students.

Financial aid and employment. The majority of the adult students did not receive financial aid but supported their educational pursuits by working more than 36 hours a week. This finding supports Bhlner's study (1975) in which he reported that financial aid was not a major reason for persistence for the part-time student.

Reason for initially entering college. The desire to achieve a degree was consistently reported by both married and single adult students, as their primary reason for entering college for the first time. The second most often reported reason was to prepare for a job. Closer examination revealed, however, that proportionately more married women ($n = 10$) than married men ($n = 7$) reported that their primary reason for entering college initially was to prepare for a job. There is also evidence of age differential for married women. Ten married women in the 26-30 age group reported that their primary reason for entering college was a desire to achieve a degree. Only two married women in the 31+ age group gave this as a primary reason. The reverse was true for the second reason most often reported by married women. More women in the 31+ age group ($n = 6$) selected to prepare for a job as their first choice for entering college, while this reason was selected by only four women in the 26-30 year age group. More single women ($n = 11$) than single men ($n = 3$) cited desire to achieve a degree as their primary reason for entering college for the first time. The reasons given by single men were more diversified. Divorced students cited prepare for a job as their primary choice for entering college. Only three divorced men in the 31+ year age group selected to prepare for a job as the primary reason for entering college initially. The divorced women in both age groups ($n = 7$) were almost equally divided in their primary choice.

Reason for re-entering college. The data show that differences exist among married, single, and divorced adult students as to their

primary reasons for re-entering college. Married adult students reported their primary reasons for re-entering college were:

(1) intellectual stimulation (n = 16), (2) desire to achieve a degree (n = 15), (3) prepare for a career change (n = 12), and (4) job upgrading (n = 10). Closer examination of the data reveal that these ten adult students who reported job upgrading were all married men.

Single students reported: (1) desire to achieve a degree (n = 6); (2) job upgrading (n = 5); and (3) prepare for a job (n = 4), prepare for a career change (n = 4), and intellectual stimulation (n = 4).

Divorced students reported: (1) prepare for a career change (n = 7) and (2) job upgrading (n = 4). Of the seven divorced students reporting prepare for a career change, as their primary reason, all were in the 31+ year age group--one was male and six were women.

Factors which Contributed to Adult Students' Decision to Withdraw

Academic reasons reported as factors for withdrawal. The most frequently selected academic reasons for withdrawing reported by adult students were: (1) needed a temporary break from studies (39.6%), (2) inadequate study techniques or habits (20.0%), and (3) lack of interest (16.3%). Significant differences were found by the age group and children variables. No significant differences were found by the variables of sex and marital status.

Adult students in the 26-30 year age group more often reported needing a temporary break from studies as a reason for withdrawing than

what was expected; while those in the 31+ year age group, reported this as a reason less often than expected.

Adult students with children reported that they needed a temporary break from studies less often than expected and those without children reported that they needed a temporary break more often than expected.

Lack of interest was reported less often as a reason for withdrawal by adult students with children than expected, while those without children reported this as a reason more often than expected.

No academic items were checked as a reason for withdrawing by 34.1 percent of the adult students. One item was checked by 23.0 percent of the adult students and two items were checked by 17.0 percent of the students. No significant differences were found as to the number of reasons checked for any of the independent variables.

Employment reasons reported as factors for withdrawal. Conflict between job and studies was the most frequently reported employment reason for withdrawing by adult students (57.8%). It was shown to be significantly different by the children variable. It is interesting to note that adults with children reported this as a reason for withdrawal less often than expected, while those without children reported that they withdrew because of job conflict more often than the expected frequency. No significant differences were found among the variables of sex, marital status, and age group. That the majority of adult students reported that conflict between job and studies was a reason for withdrawal, supports Astin's (1975) research. He stated that

"full time employment, particularly if it was off campus, had a negative impact" (p. 19).

Only one employment reason was checked by the majority of adult students (56.3%) as a reason for withdrawing and 40 percent did not check any employment reasons. Significant differences were found only by the children variable. Adult students with children indicated that employment was not a reason for withdrawing more often than expected, and adults without children reported it as a reason more often than expected.

Financial reasons reported as factors for withdrawal. The most frequently selected financial reasons reported by adult students for withdrawing were: (1) not enough money to go to school (25.1%), and (2) this school too expensive (15.5%). Significant differences were found by the age group variable and the marital status variable. Adult students in the 26-30 year age group reported more often that they did not have enough money to go to school than expected, while adults in the 31+ year age group reported it as a reason for withdrawing less often than the expected frequency. Single students cited that they didn't have enough money to go to school more often than the expected frequency while the married students cited that they didn't have enough money as a reason for withdrawing less often than the expected frequency.

For the majority of adult students, financial problems were not a major reason for withdrawing. More than 67 percent (67.7%) of the adult students in the study did not cite a financial reason for withdrawing and only 33.3 percent selected one or more financial reasons

for withdrawing. This finding supports the findings of Pantages and Creedon (1978) who reported that finances were not a major reason for withdrawal.

The number of financial reasons checked, however, was shown to be significantly different for married, single, and divorced students. Single adult students cited more financial reasons for withdrawing than what was the expected frequency. More married adult students reported that finances were not a reason for withdrawing than expected. The results for the divorced students were much less clear cut, with some divorced students indicating that finances were not a reason, whereas an equal number reported that, in fact, finances were a reason for withdrawing. This finding supports Bhalnager's study on the part-time adult student. He reports that financial support was not a major reason for persistence.

Personal reasons reported as factors for withdrawal. Adult students withdrawing for personal reasons, selected most often: (1) found study too time consuming (37.1%), (2) home responsibilities were too great (35.5%), (3) personal problems (28.2%) and (4) personal illness (17.8%). Significant differences were found for the marital status variable and the children variable.

Married adult students reported that they needed to withdraw because their home responsibilities were too great more often than the expected frequency, while single adult students reported this as a reason for withdrawing less often than expected. Divorced students did not differ from the expected frequencies.

There were more adults with children who reported they withdrew because of personal illness than the expected frequency while adults without children reported this as a reason less often than the expected frequency. More than 32 percent (32.6%) of the adult students did not report any personal reasons for withdrawing; one item was reported by 26.7 percent of the adult students; two items were reported by 16.3 percent; and 24.4 percent reported more than two personal reasons for withdrawing. There were no significant differences found.

Academic advising services reported as factors for withdrawal.

Out of eighty-two adult students (60.7%) who reported a degree of satisfaction with this response option, forty-five (33.3%) reported some satisfaction with the academic advising services and thirty-seven (27.4%) reported little or no satisfaction. The female adult students reported being more satisfied with the academic advising services than expected, while fewer male adult students reported some satisfaction than expected.

Grading system reported as factor for withdrawal. Out of the ninety-two (68.1%) adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with this response option, seventy-one (52.6%) reported some satisfaction and twenty-one (15.5%) reported little or no satisfaction with the university's grading system. Significant differences were found only for the marital status variable. More of the married adult students reported some satisfaction with the grading system than expected, while there were fewer single adult students who reported some satisfaction than the expected frequency. Seventy-three (54.1%) of the

adult students reported that the university's grading system did not apply to them, and sixty (44.4%) reported a degree of satisfaction with this response option. There were more single adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the grading system than the expected frequency and fewer married adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction than expected. Divorced students did not differ significantly from the expected frequency.

Quality of the faculty reported as factors for withdrawal.

Out of the 102 (76.4%) adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with faculty quality, eighty-seven (64.4%) reported some satisfaction, and fifteen (12.0%) reported little or no satisfaction. Significant differences were found only for the children variable. More adults with children reported some satisfaction with the quality of the faculty than the expected frequency, while adults without children were less satisfied than the expected frequency.

Attitude of the clerical staff reported as factors for withdrawal. Out of the eighty-eight adult students (65.1%) who reported a degree of satisfaction with the university's clerical staff, sixty-five (48.1%) reported some satisfaction and twenty-three (17.0%) reported little or no satisfaction with the attitude of the clerical staff toward them as students. Significant differences were found only for the sex variable. More men reported some satisfaction with the attitudes of the clerical staff toward them as students than expected while there were fewer women who reported some satisfaction with this aspect than the expected frequency.

Cost of attending the university reported as factors for withdrawal. Out of the eighty-seven adult students (64.5%) who reported a degree of satisfaction with the cost of attending the university, thirty-six (26.7%) reported some satisfaction and fifty-one (37.8%) reported little or no satisfaction with the cost. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable and the age group variable. More single adult students reported some satisfaction with the cost of attending the university than the expected frequency, while there were fewer divorced students than the expected frequency who reported some satisfaction with the cost of attending the university. Married adult students did not differ significantly from the expected frequency.

More adult students in the 31+ year age group reported some satisfaction with the cost of attending the university than expected, while there were fewer of the adults in the 26-30 year age group who were satisfied than the expected frequency.

Opportunity to interact with own peer group reported as factor for withdrawal. Out of the eighty-eight adult students (65.2%) who reported a degree of satisfaction with opportunities to interact with their own peers, fifty-five (40.7%) reported some satisfaction and thirty-three (24.5%) reported little or no satisfaction with this aspect. Significant differences were found only by the children variable. More adults without children reported some satisfaction with opportunities to interact with their own peer group than the expected frequency while adults with children were less satisfied than the expected frequency.

Forty-three (31.9%) of the adult students reported that having opportunity to interact with their peer group did not apply to them, and eighty-eight (65.2%) reported a degree of satisfaction with this response option. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable and the children variable. There were more single adult students who reported there were opportunities to interact with their peer group than the expected frequency, while there were fewer married students who reported having opportunities to meet with their peer group than expected and fewer divorced adult students than the expected frequency who reported opportunities to interact with their own peer group.

Married students without children also had more opportunity to meet with peers than expected and those with children had fewer opportunities than expected.

Course content in major field reported as factor for withdrawal.

Ninety-nine adult students (68.1%) reported a degree of satisfaction with this response option but thirty-four (25.2%) reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were reported only for the marital status variable. More divorced adult students reported a degree of satisfaction with course content in their major field than the expected frequency while the married students responded less often than expected. Responses for the single students did not differ significantly from the expected frequency.

Attitude of faculty reported as factor for withdrawal. There were 102 adult students (75.6%) who reported a degree of satisfaction

with faculty attitude and twenty-nine (21.50%) who reported that the issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were reported for the marital status variable.

More single students reported a degree of satisfaction with faculty attitude than the expected frequency, while married adult students responded less often to this aspect than expected as well as the divorced adult students than the expected frequency.

This finding may concur indirectly with Zahn's (1964) study from which she drew the following hypothesis:

students may drop out of courses where constant information concerning achievement is an integral part of the instructional pattern. Students with low academic ability may give other, more socially acceptable or ego-sustaining responses to questionnaires rather than admit or even realize that they are embarrassed and discouraged by inadequate performance during the class. (p. 7)

Intellectual stimulation reported as factor for withdrawal.

There were 101 adult students (74.8%) who reported a degree of satisfaction with the intellectual stimulation at the university, and thirty-two (23.7%) who reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were reported for the marital status variable. More single adult students reported a degree of satisfaction to the intellectual stimulation on campus than the expected frequency, while there were fewer married students than expected, as well as fewer divorced students than expected who reported a degree of satisfaction with intellectual stimulation.

Quality of the students reported as factor for withdrawal.

There were ninety-five (70.4%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the quality of the students at the

university, while thirty-six (26.7%) reported that this aspect did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable. More single students reported a degree of satisfaction than what was expected and fewer married students who reported a degree of satisfaction than was expected. Divorced adult students did not differ significantly from what was expected.

Teaching in major field reported as factor for withdrawal.

There were eighty-one (60.0%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the kind of instruction received in their major field, and forty-nine (36.3%) reported that this aspect of the university did not apply to them. Significant differences were found by the children variable. Adult students without children reported more often a degree of satisfaction with the kind of instruction received in their major field than expected, while fewer adult students with children responded to this aspect than expected.

Enrollment size of the university reported as factors for withdrawal. There were seventy-three (54.1%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the enrollment size of the university and sixty (44.4%) who responded that the issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable. More single adult students reported a degree of satisfaction on the enrollment size of the university than the expected frequency, while there were fewer married students than expected and fewer divorced students than expected who reported a degree of satisfaction about the enrollment size.

Rules and regulations of the university reported as factors for withdrawal. There were sixty-eight (50.4%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the university's rules and regulations and sixty-four (47.4%) who reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable. There were more single students who reported a degree of satisfaction than the expected frequency as well as more divorced adult students than expected. Married adult students responded less often to this issue than expected.

Location of the university reported as a factor for withdrawal. There were 101 adult students (74.8%) who reported a degree of satisfaction with the location of the university and thirty-two (23.7%) adult students reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable. There were more single adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the university's location than the expected frequency; moreover, there were more divorced adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction than expected. The married students, on the other hand, reported less often than the expected frequency.

Information given you about the university before enrolling reported as factor for withdrawal. There were ninety-four (69.6%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the information they received before enrolling at the university and thirty-nine (28.9%) who reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status

variable. More single adult students reported a degree of satisfaction about the information received from the university before enrolling than expected. Fewer married students reported a degree of satisfaction than expected about information received. The divorced adult students also responded slightly less than the expected frequency.

Residence/living accommodations reported as factors for withdrawal. There were forty-four (32.6%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the on-campus living accommodations, while 87 (64.0%) reported that the issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable and the children variable.

More single adult students reported a degree of satisfaction with the living accommodations on campus than the expected frequency, while fewer married adult students than the expected frequency and fewer divorced adult students than the expected frequency responded to the living accommodations.

More adults without children reported a degree of satisfaction with the living accommodations than expected while fewer adults with children than expected reported a degree of satisfaction with on-campus living accommodations.

Financial aid opportunities reported as factor for withdrawal. There were fifty-two (38.5%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with financial aid opportunities and eighty-one (60.0%) reported that the issue of financial aid did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the age group variable.

More adult students in the 31+ year age group did not report a degree of satisfaction than expected, while fewer adult students in the 26-30 year age group did not report a degree of satisfaction than the expected frequency.

Extra-curricular opportunities reported as factors for withdrawal. There were fifty-seven (42.1%) of the adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with the extra-curricular opportunities available to them, and seventy-six (56.3%) who reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable and the children variable.

More single adult students than expected and more divorced adult students than expected reported a degree of satisfaction with available extra-curricular opportunities, while married adult student responded less often than the expected frequency.

There were also more adults without children who reported a degree of satisfaction with extra-curricular opportunities than the expected frequency, while adults with children responded less often than the expected frequency.

Cultural opportunities reported as factors for withdrawal. Ninety-eight (65.3%) of the adult students reported a degree of satisfaction with the campus cultural opportunities and forty-five (33.3%) of the adult students reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were reported for the marital status variable.

More single students reported a degree of satisfaction with the cultural opportunities available to them than expected. Divorced

students also reported a degree of satisfaction more often than expected with the cultural opportunities, while fewer married adult students than expected responded on the issue.

Social opportunities reported as factors for withdrawal.

Seventy-eight (57.8%) adult students reported a degree of satisfaction with the social opportunities available to them and fifty-two (38.5%) reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status, age group, and children variables.

More single adult students reported a degree of satisfaction with the social opportunities available to them than the expected frequency, while there were fewer married adult students than expected who responded to this issue. The divorced adult students did not differ from the expected frequencies.

More adult students without children reported a degree of satisfaction with social opportunities than expected, while fewer adult students with children responded to this issue than the expected frequency.

There were also more adults in the 26-30 year age group who reported a degree of satisfaction with the social opportunities on campus than expected, while adults in the 31+ year age group responded fewer times to the issue of social opportunities than the expected frequency.

Recreational facilities reported as factors for withdrawal.

There were seventy-six (56.3%) adult students who reported a degree of satisfaction with recreational facilities available to them and

fifty-six (41.5%) who reported that this issue did not apply to them. Significant differences were found for the marital status variable and the children variable.

More single adult students than the expected frequency reported a degree of satisfaction with the recreational facilities available, while fewer married adult students than the expected frequency responded to this issue as well as fewer divorced adult students than the expected frequency responded to the issue of recreational facilities.

Adult students without children responded more often than the expected frequency to the issue of recreational facilities while adults with children responded less often than expected.

Summary of Factors Which Contributed to the Adult Students' Decision to Withdraw

Closer examination by the independent variables showed that there were more single adult students and adults in the 26-30 year age group, who withdrew because of financial problems than did the married and divorced adults, and adults in the 31+ year age group. There were more married adults who reported that they withdrew because their home responsibilities were too great than did either the single or divorced adult students.

More adult students with children withdrew because of personal problems than did those without children. However, more adult students without children than those with children reported that they withdrew because they needed a temporary break from studies, they were unsure

of their major, they lacked interest, and they had conflicts between their jobs and their studies.

Levels of satisfaction--marital status. Single adult students reported they were more satisfied with the cost of attending the university than did the divorced adult students. They had more opportunities to interact with their own peers, more experience with the social, cultural, and extra-curricular opportunities on campus, as well as with the recreational facilities, than did either the divorced adult students or married adult students with children.

Single students appeared to be more satisfied than either the married or divorced adult students with the intellectual stimulation on the campus, the quality of the students, the location of the university, and with the information received about the university before enrolling.

Single adult students expressed more concern with the attitude of the faculty, the grading system, and the university's rules and regulations than did either the married or divorced adult students.

Married adult students reported they were more satisfied with the grading system than the single adult students.

Divorced adult students more often expressed concern with the course content in their major field and with the university's rules and regulations than did the married adult students. They appeared to be more satisfied with the location of the university and the enrollment size than did the married adult students. They also had more experience with the extra-curricular and cultural opportunities on campus than did the married adult students.

Sex. The women reported to be more satisfied with the academic advising services than the men; however, the men reported being more satisfied with clerical attitudes toward them as students than did the women.

Age group. The adults in the 26-30 year age group were less satisfied with the cost of attending the university than the adult students who were over 30 years. They also had more social opportunities and more experience with the recreational facilities on the campus than adult students in the 31+ year age group, and they appeared to be more satisfied with the cost of attending the university than the older adult students.

Children/no children. Adult students with children appeared to be more satisfied with the quality of the faculty than adult students without children. The adult students without children, on the other hand, had more opportunities to interact with their own peer group, more experience with the extra-curricular, social, and recreational facilities on the campus and more experience with the on-campus living accommodations, than the adults with children.

Overall, the adult students who withdrew seemed most satisfied with the following aspects of the university (in the order of reported frequency): (1) the university in general, (2) the location of the university, (3) the quality of the faculty, (4) the intellectual stimulation of the campus, and (5) the quality of the students. They seemed least satisfied with (in the order of reported frequency): (1) the scheduling of classes, (2) the cost of attending the university,

(3) the amount of contact with instructors, (4) the academic advising services, (5) getting into desired classes, and (6) opportunities to interact with their own peer group.

The major reasons for withdrawing from the university fall term 1979, reported most often by the adult students in general, in order of priority, were: (1) conflict between job and studies, (2) found study too time consuming, (3) home responsibilities were too great, (4) need a temporary break from studies, (5) personal problems, and (6) not enough money to go to school.

University Related Factors Which
Contributed to Withdrawal of
Adult Students

There were a number of university related factors reported by the adult students which contributed to their decision to withdraw fall term 1979.

- Fifty-four of the adult students (40%) reported little or no satisfaction with the scheduling of classes on campus.
- Fifty-one (37.8%) reported little or no satisfaction with the cost of attending the university.
- Forty adult students (29.6%) reported they needed a temporary break from studies.
- Thirty-seven adult students (27.4%) reported little or no satisfaction with academic advising services.
- Thirty-eight adult students (28.1%) reported little or no satisfaction with the amount of contact they had with their instructors.

- Thirty-four adult students (25.1%) reported that they did not have enough money to go to school.
- Thirty-three adult students (24.5%) reported little or no satisfaction in getting into desired classes.
- Thirty-three adult students (24.5%) reported little or no satisfaction with opportunities to interact with their own peer group.
- Twenty-seven (20.0%) reported that they had inadequate study techniques or habits.
- Twenty-two (16.3%) of the adult students reported that they withdrew because of lack of interest.
- Twenty-one (15.6%) reported that they withdrew because they were unsure of their major.
- Twenty-one (15.6%) reported that they found the courses too difficult.
- Twenty-one (15.6%) reported that they withdrew because MSU was too expensive.
- Seventeen adult students (12.6%) withdrew because they reported they feared the ability to do well.
- Fifteen adult students (11.2%) reported that they were dissatisfied with their major department.
- Thirteen adult students (9.7%) reported that they withdrew because of low grades.
- Eleven adult students (8.2%) reported that their financial aid was not sufficient.

- Eight adult students (5.9%) reported that they applied for financial aid but were not eligible.
- Six adult students (4.5%) reported that they withdrew because their course was cancelled.

The Number and Percentage of Adult
Students Who Leave for Reasons
Amenable to Remedial Action by
the University

The adult students in the study reported a number of factors which contributed to their decision to withdraw from the university which this researcher believed could be amenable to remedial action. The researcher defined amenable to remedial action factors as administratively feasible changes which would be of benefit to the adult students on campus but which would not necessarily require large budgetary increases nor the development of new departments requiring the increase of academic and professional staffs.

The number and percentage of the adult students who withdrew for factors which could be amenable to remedial action were:

- Fifty-six adult students (40.0%) reported little or no satisfaction with the scheduling of classes.
- Thirty-seven (27.4%) reported little or no satisfaction with academic advising services.
- Thirty-eight (28.1%) reported little or no satisfaction with the amount of contact with instructors.
- Thirty-four (25.1%) reported they did not have enough money to go to school.

- Thirty-three (24.5%) reported little or no satisfaction getting into desired classes.
- Thirty-three (24.5%) reported little or no satisfaction with opportunities to interact with own peer group.
- Twenty-seven (20.0%) reported inadequate study techniques or habits.
- Twenty-two (16.3%) reported they withdrew because of lack of interest.
- Twenty-one (15.6%) reported they withdrew because they were unsure of their major.
- Twenty-one (15.6%) reported they found their courses too difficult.

Number and Percentage of Adult Students
Who Withdrew for Reasons Not Amenable
to Remedial Action by the University

- Seventy-eight of the adult students (57.8%) reported they withdrew because there was conflict between job and studies.
- Fifty adult students (37.1%) reported they found study too time consuming.
- Forty-eight (35.5%) reported that home responsibilities were too great.
- Thirty-eight (28.2%) reported they withdrew because of personal problems.
- Twenty-four (17.8%) reported personal illness as the cause for withdrawing.
- Twelve adults (8.9%) reported they were moving out of the area.

- Twelve adults students (8.9%) reported that their marital situation changed their education plans.
- Eleven adult students (8.2%) reported they withdrew because they lacked encouragement from their spouse.
- Nine adult students (6.7%) reported family illness as a reason for withdrawing.
- Eight adult students (6.0%) reported they withdrew because child care was not available or too costly.
- Four adult students (3.0%) reported they withdrew because they lacked encouragement from their family.
- Four adult students (3.0%) reported they withdrew because they lacked encouragement from their friends.
- Four adult students (3.0%) reported that they withdrew because they had fulfilled their personal goals in schooling.
- Two adult students (1.5%) reported that they withdrew because there was a death of a family member.

Conclusions and Recommendations for Further Research

Intervention Strategies Which Michigan State University Might Take to Retain a Higher Percentage of Its Adult Student Body

Successful intervention strategies which Michigan State University might take to retain a higher percentage of its adult student body are the responsibility of the entire institution. Moreover, success is dependent upon institutional commitment--a willingness on the part of the university's administrative and academic structures to make some necessary changes in order to meet adult students' needs.

The following suggested intervention strategies developed by this researcher are based on (1) the results of major research findings, (2) concerns expressed by adult students during the interview sessions with the researcher, and (3) by their written comments on questionnaire.

1. Michigan State University should schedule more early morning, late afternoon, and evening classes both at the undergraduate and graduate levels in all academic disciplines. Special attention should be given to increase the number and variety of evening classes.

2. Michigan State University should develop a continuous orientation program for faculty and staff who work with adult students both in the classrooms and in the day-to-day contacts with administrative and clerical staffs. Adult students who withdrew expressed concerns about the attitudes of the faculty and clerks toward them as students.

3. Michigan State University should schedule office hours to accommodate the adult clientele.

4. Michigan State University should develop orientation programs for new and returning adult students. A series of orientation letters beginning with admission or re-admission to the university could be developed and sent to adult students on a continual basis throughout the academic year. Subject matter could be related to general and specific issues such as the kinds of support services available to adult students both on the campus and in the community; discussion of registration procedures; discussion of some of the problems they may encounter on their return to campus as they attempt to

balance employment, courses, and the needs of their families. The academic departments could be responsible for the distribution of the newsletter to help develop a sense of identification between the adult students and the department. Content development could be the responsibility of the Office of the Dean of Lifelong Education, utilizing the Adult and Continuing Education graduate student interns as resources for content preparation.

Other media for handling the orientation process could also be used. Audio cassettes covering a wide variety of issues of concern to the adult student could be made available at the library or academic departments. Adult students could check these out at times convenient to them. Film strips, video tapes, and slides could be placed at strategic locations on campus--the Union, the International Center, and lobbies of classroom buildings where the majority of evening classes are held. These media could be in use during Welcome Week, before and during mid-terms, before finals, and at other times of stress to students. The university could also better utilize the educational TV channel, university radio (WKAR), cable TV channels, and other programs designated for educational programming by the local TV stations.

5. Michigan State University should develop a centrally located place such as a room in the Union where adult students could become acquainted with their peers, study, and relax.

The development of such a designated area would help to alleviate another concern expressed by 24.5 percent of the adult students who withdrew; i.e., that they had few opportunities to interact with their

own peer group. A Learning Exchange could also be incorporated at this central location. By placing a bulletin board in the room, those who need help with courses could be matched with adult students who would be willing to be of assistance.

6. Michigan State University should make adult students aware of the kinds of counseling services available to them and should make available counseling services which are geared to the needs of the adult students. A number of the adult students who withdrew and who had attempted to utilize the counseling center, expressed concern that the counselors seemed unaware of adult needs and consequently did not receive the help they needed. Some of the single parents with teen-age children felt the counseling center was unresponsive, and other adult students encountering difficulties with combining work, school, and family, reported similarly. There is also a need for re-entry counseling and information about options which are available for the adult student. These services should be made available at times convenient for the adult students.

7. Michigan State University should make adult students aware of the support services which are available to them, such as the Learning Resources Center. Twenty percent of the adult students reported they had inadequate study techniques or habits as a reason for withdrawing.

8. Michigan State University should acquaint every adult student with the kinds of financial aid opportunities available. Although the majority of the adult students were full-time employees,

25.1 percent reported that they did not have enough money to go to school, as a reason for withdrawing.

9. Michigan State University should develop more diversified methods of instruction for adult students. More than 57 percent of the adult students withdrew because of conflict between job and studies. Perhaps one means of alleviating such conflict would be to tape some course lectures and make these available to adult students. Other technologies should be utilized to develop programs of instruction that would allow adult students to pursue their educational objectives in a more independent manner. Entire courses could be developed on audio cassettes. Greater use could be made for a greater variety of courses on the educational TV station, on cable TV, and on the university radio station.

10. Michigan State University should develop involvement strategies which would help certain adult students engage more fully with the campus community. The need for involvement is of particular importance for married adult students with children, especially the older divorced women with children. Research has shown that withdrawal behavior is influenced by the degree of integration into the social and academic systems of an institution (Tinto, 1975). A strategy suggested from this researcher's interviews which might be beneficial, is the development of support groups by which these married and divorced adult students could interact with their peers.

11. Michigan State University should develop or adapt certain administrative procedures to meet the needs of adult students. Changes

should be made in a number of administrative procedures. For example, adult students who are employed full time should be permitted to drop and add courses in the evening during the university's drop and add period. Also, adult students should be allowed to drop courses through correspondence. Opportunities should be made available for adult students to early enroll and early register in the evening rather than to have to take time away from their work in order to be assured the needed courses. Advisors should be encouraged to handle student concerns over the phone rather than to require that they make appointments to see them. Administrative and academic departments should be encouraged to make greater use of the campus messenger service to obtain multiple signatures on administrative forms, rather than require the adult students to carry them from department to department.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several implications for future research have emerged from this study. The following are some of the possibilities for continued research as they pertain to the factors which contribute to the withdrawal of adult students from four year institutions of higher education.

1. A replication of this study should be made using a larger sample of adult students in order to study the interaction effects between the variables. Only the main effects of the independent variables were tested in this study due to the size of the sample used and the way in which the responses were distributed.

2. This study might also be replicated for similar universities in the United States to determine if the characteristics and factors which contributed to the adult student's decision to withdraw at Michigan State University are held nationally.

3. Further research is recommended to study what similarities and differences exist between the adult students who withdrew within the term and those adult students who complete the term but fail to return to the university to complete their educational goals.

4. There is need for further research to identify the characteristics of the adult students who complete their educational objectives and to determine the factors which contributed to the achievement of these objectives.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE
FOR
STUDENTS WITHDRAWING FROM
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Fall Term, 1979

1. Date of Birth: ____/____/____
(month) (year)
2. Sex: ____ (1) Female ____ (2) Male
3. Marital Status: (PLEASE CHECK ONE)
____ (1) Married ____ (2) Single (never married)
____ (3) Divorced ____ (4) Widowed
4. Do you have any children?
____ (1) Yes
____ (2) No
5. What was your age when you first entered college? (PLEASE SPECIFY) ____ Years.
6. Which one of the following degrees are you currently working toward?
(PLEASE CHECK ONE)
____ (1) Bachelor's ____ (4) PhD
____ (2) 2nd Bachelor's ____ (5) Professional (Human Medicine,
Osteopathic Medicine, Vet Medicine)
____ (3) Master's ____ (6) Special Student
(Guest, Unclassified, Life Long Ed.)
7. The following question is intended to get a view of your attendance pattern in college. Please indicate in the spaces provided, your attendance during a school year. (COMPLETE ALL THAT APPLY.)
- | | |
|---|---------------------------|
| ____ (1) 2-year Community College: | ____ (4) Master's: |
| Fr: 19__ So: 19__ | 19__ |
| ____ (2) Bachelor's - 4 year college or univ: | ____ (5) PhD: |
| Fr: 19__ Jr: 19__ | 19__ |
| So: 19__ Sr: 19__ | ____ (6) Professional: |
| ____ (3) 2nd Bachelor's: | 19__ |
| 19__ | ____ (7) Special Student: |
| | 19__ |
8. What is your current major: (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____

9. What is your current college: (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____
10. During the last three terms (or less) that you have been enrolled, were you primarily: (PLEASE CHECK ONE)
____ (1) A full-time student
____ (2) A part-time student
____ (3) Both during the last three terms
11. Are you receiving financial aid?
____ (1) Yes ____ (2) No
- A. If "yes" which of the following types of Financial Aid were you receiving: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)
____ (1) Scholarship ____ (4) Loan
____ (2) Grant ____ (5) Work-Study
____ (3) VA Educational Assistance ____ (6) Other _____
PLEASE SPECIFY
- B. If "no" how have you supported your education?

12. During the last three terms (or less) that you have been enrolled, have you been employed in a job?
____ (1) Yes ____ (2) No
- A. If "yes" check the number of hours employed.
____ (1) Employed 1 - 10 hours/week
____ (2) Employed 11 - 20 hours/week
____ (3) Employed 21 - 35 hours/week
____ (4) Employed 36 or more hours/week
13. What is your cumulative overall grade point average (GPA) at Michigan State University? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)
____ (1) Below 1 point ____ (5) 2.51 - 2.99
____ (2) 1.0 - 1.5 ____ (6) 3.0 - 3.50
____ (3) 1.51 - 1.99 ____ (7) 3.51 - 4.0
____ (4) 2.0 - 2.50

14. Have you ever been on academic probation while enrolled at Michigan State University? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)

☐ (1) Yes ☐ (2) No

15. Are you currently on probation? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)

☐ (1) Yes ☐ (2) No

16. For what reason(s) did you decide to enter or re-enter college? (PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ENTERED COLLEGE
INITIALLY

- ☐ (1) Desire to achieve a degree
☐ (2) Job upgrading
☐ (3) Prepare for a job
☐ (4) To resume an interrupted college career
☐ (5) Prepare for a career change
☐ (6) To meet new people
☐ (7) To supplement family income
☐ (8) For intellectual stimulation
☐ (9) To improve my earning potential
☐ (10) Pressure from peers
☐ (11) Pressure from spouse
☐ (12) Pressure from parents
☐ (13) No specific reason
☐ (14) Other _____

(PLEASE SPECIFY)

RE-ENTERED COLLEGE
(if applicable)

- ☐ (1)
☐ (2)
☐ (3)
☐ (4)
☐ (5)
☐ (6)
☐ (7)
☐ (8)
☐ (9)
☐ (10)
☐ (11)
☐ (12)
☐ (13)
☐ (14)

17. Which of the above was the single most influential reason when you entered college initially? _____

18. If applicable, which of the above was the single most influential reason when you re-entered college? _____

19. How many previous times have you withdrawn from Michigan State University? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)

- ☐ (1) One time previously ☐ (3) Three or more times
☐ (2) Two times ☐ (4) This is my first time

20. Listed below are several reasons why a student might leave college. To what extent are these your reasons for leaving Michigan State University? (CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE)

	Major Reason	Moderate Reason	Minor Reason	Not a Reason
<u>ACADEMIC</u>				
(1) Low grades	1	2	3	4
(2) Found courses too difficult	1	2	3	4
(3) Inadequate study techniques or habits	1	2	3	4
(4) Needed a temporary break from studies	1	2	3	4
(5) Major or courses not available at this university	1	2	3	4
(6) Unsure of major and need to leave school to decide on possible careers	1	2	3	4
(7) Course work not challenging	1	2	3	4
(8) Learned what I came to learn	1	2	3	4
(9) Dissatisfaction with major department	1	2	3	4
(10) Lack of interest	1	2	3	4
(11) Course cancelled	1	2	3	4
(12) Fear of ability to do well in college	1	2	3	4
(13) Other _____ (PLEASE SPECIFY)	1	2	3	4
<u>EMPLOYMENT</u>				
(14) Conflict between job and studies	1	2	3	4
(15) Accepted a job and didn't need more school	1	2	3	4
(16) Couldn't find a job	1	2	3	4

20. continued

Major Reason Moderate Reason Minor Reason Not a Reason

FINANCIAL

(17) Not enough money to go to school	1	2	3	4
(18) Applied but could not obtain	1	2	3	4
(19) Financial aid was not sufficient	1	2	3	4
(20) Child care not available or too costly	1	2	3	4
(21) This school too expensive	1	2	3	4

PERSONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

(22) Found study too time-consuming	1	2	3	4
(23) Home responsibilities were too great	1	2	3	4
(24) Family illness	1	2	3	4
(25) Personal illness	1	2	3	4
(26) Fulfilled my personal goals in schooling	1	2	3	4
(27) Marital situation changed my education plans	1	2	3	4
(28) Personal problems	1	2	3	4
(29) Moving out of the area	1	2	3	4
(30) Lack of encouragement from spouse	1	2	3	4
(31) Lack of encouragement from family	1	2	3	4
(32) Lack of encouragement from friends	1	2	3	4
(33) Death of a family member	1	2	3	4

You may comment on your particular situation, if you would care to. _____

21. Please circle the rating you feel best describes your degree of satisfaction with the following aspects of Michigan State University. If you have had no personal first-hand experience, circle "Does not Apply".

DEGREE OF SATISFACTION

	Much	Moderate	Little	None	Does not Apply
(1) Counseling/guidance services	1	2	3	4	5
(2) Academic advising services	1	2	3	4	5
(3) Library Services	1	2	3	4	5
(4) Employment Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
(5) Financial Aid Opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
(6) Cost of attending the university	1	2	3	4	5
(7) Enrollment size of the university	1	2	3	4	5
(8) Rules and regulations at the university	1	2	3	4	5
(9) Extra-curricular opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
(10) Intellectual stimulation	1	2	3	4	5
(11) Cultural opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
(12) Social opportunities	1	2	3	4	5
(13) Recreational facilities	1	2	3	4	5
(14) Location of the university	1	2	3	4	5
(15) Residence/living accommodation	1	2	3	4	5
(16) Grading system	1	2	3	4	5
(17) Course content in your major field	1	2	3	4	5
(18) Teaching in your major field	1	2	3	4	5
(19) Amount of contact with your instructors	1	2	3	4	5
(20) Scheduling of classes	1	2	3	4	5
(21) Getting into desired classes	1	2	3	4	5
(22) Relevance of your major field to your career goals	1	2	3	4	5
(23) Information given to you about this university before enrolling	1	2	3	4	5

21. continued

	DEGREE OF SATISFACTION				
	Much	Moderate	Little	None	Does not Apply
(24) Quality of students	1	2	3	4	5
(25) The university in general	1	2	3	4	5
(26) Opportunity to interact with own peer group	1	2	3	4	5
(27) Attitude of faculty toward me as a student	1	2	3	4	5
(28) Attitude of my advisor	1	2	3	4	5
(29) Attitude of administrative staff	1	2	3	4	5
(30) Attitudes of clerical staff toward me as a student	1	2	3	4	5
(31) Quality of faculty	1	2	3	4	5

22. Please select from the list above, three factors, which if changed for the better, would have most encouraged you to stay at Michigan State University.
(LIST IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

23. What are your future plans now that you are withdrawing from the university?
(PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- ☐ (1) Plan to return to MSU next term
- ☐ (2) Plan to return to MSU within the next
- ☐ (3) Plan to attend another university
- ☐ (4) Looking for a job
- ☐ (5) Working in a job
- ☐ (6) Traveling
- ☐ (7) Caring for home and/or family
- ☐ (8) Other (PLEASE SPECIFY) _____
- _____

APPENDIX B

LETTER ATTACHED TO QUESTIONNAIRE

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN 48823

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS • STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING

Dear MSU Student:

The Office of Student Withdrawals of the Vice President for Student Affairs, is interested in determining the reasons why you are withdrawing from Michigan State University and your degree of satisfaction with various aspects of the University. It is hoped, through this questionnaire, to determine the characteristics, desires, needs and suggestions of students who find it necessary to voluntarily withdraw before completing the term.

Your cooperation in this study will provide information which may be used to aid in solving problems and improve student life for you and others. Your opinions and suggestions are important.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Any information given is strictly confidential, and will be treated with greatest respect.

Your assistance and cooperation in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

**Betty DeIDin,
Director of Student Withdrawals**

APPENDIX C

FIRST LETTER SENT TO STUDENT SAMPLE

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS
STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING,

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824

We have been notified by the Registrar's Office that you have dropped your course(s) for Fall term. Since all of your courses for which you were registered were dropped, this constitutes a within term withdrawal. The enclosed information sheet will give you the necessary information should you desire to be re-admitted at some future term.

Since you were unable to complete the Voluntary Withdrawal Questionnaire in the office, I would appreciate your taking approximately 10 minutes of your time and completing the attached questionnaire. Please return it as quickly as possible in the self addressed, stamped envelope, which is enclosed for your convenience.

The Office of Student Withdrawals of the Vice President for Student Affairs, is particularly interested in determining the reasons why you, as an adult student, are withdrawing from Michigan State University and your degree of satisfaction with various aspects of the University. It is hoped, through this questionnaire, to determine the characteristics, desires, needs and suggestions of students who find it necessary to voluntarily withdraw before completing the term.

Your cooperation in this study will provide information which may be used to aid in solving problems and improve student life for you and others. Your opinions and suggestions are important.

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Any information given is strictly confidential, and will be treated with greatest respect.

Your assistance and cooperation in completing this questionnaire is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Betty DelDin,
Director of Student Withdrawals

Enclosures

APPENDIX D

SECOND LETTER SENT TO STUDENT SAMPLE

MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF THE DEAN OF STUDENTS
STUDENT SERVICES BUILDING

EAST LANSING • MICHIGAN • 48824

November 1, 1979

Mr. John Smith
1000 South Street
Anywhere, Michigan

Dear Mr. Smith:

In October, I sent you a questionnaire concerning your withdrawal from Michigan State University for Fall term, 1979. As yet I have not received a reply.

In case the earlier questionnaire has been misplaced, I am enclosing another one accompanied with a self addressed, stamped envelope for your convenience.

You can contribute valuable information about adult students in higher education who, like yourself, find it necessary to withdraw before completing the term.

It would be most appreciated if you could give the attached questionnaire your careful attention, complete it, and return it to me by November 9. You can be assured that the information will be held in strictest confidence. Thanks so much.

Sincerely,

Betty DelDin
Director, Student Withdrawals.

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW GUIDE

No. _____

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS1. FAMILY BACKGROUNDA. Highest Educational
Level of:

	Grade School	High School	College	Graduate School	Other
Mother					
Father					
Sisters					
Brothers					
Spouse					

B. Occupation of:

Mother _____

Father _____

Spouse _____

2. For what reasons are you withdrawing? _____

3. When did you make your decision to withdraw? _____ Today? _____

Within this last week? _____; 2 weeks ago? _____; 3 or more weeks
ago? _____

4. Before you made your decision, what efforts did you take to avoid
the need to withdraw? _____

5. What intervention techniques might the university have taken, which might have allowed you to complete this term? _____

6. Are you planning to return to complete your academic program at Michigan State University? Yes _____ No _____

If no, why not? _____

If yes, what intervention techniques might the university have taken which would have allowed you to complete your academic program without interruption?

APPENDIX F

NCHEMS QUESTIONNAIRE

(NAME OF INSTITUTION)
CONFIDENTIAL QUESTIONNAIRE FOR
NONRETURNING STUDENTS

1. Name _____
Last First M.I. Month / Year
2. Home Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____
3. Student ID Number _____
4. Date of Birth _____ / _____
Month Year
5. Sex: _____(1) Female _____(2) Male
6. Civil Rights Category (PLEASE CHECK ONE)
(✓)
____(1) American Indian or Alaska Native
____(2) Asian or Pacific Islander
____(3) Black/Negro
____(4) Hispanic
____(5) White, Other than Hispanic
7. Marital Status (PLEASE CHECK ONE)
(✓)
____(1) Not married, no children
____(2) Not married, with children
____(3) Married, no children
____(4) Married, with children
8. If married, is spouse a student? _____(1) Yes _____(2) No
9. Are you a veteran? _____(1) Yes _____(2) No
10. Please briefly describe the reasons why you left school.

11. Which one of the following degrees or certificates were you working toward at the time you left school?
(PLEASE CHECK ONE)
(✓)
____(1) Certificate
____(2) Diploma (other than those listed below)
____(3) Associate degree
____(4) Bachelor's degree
____(5) Master's degree
____(6) Professional degree (includes only dentistry, medicine, optometry, osteopathy, podiatry,
veterinary medicine, law, and theology)
____(7) Doctor's degree (e.g., Ph.D., Ed.D., D.B.A.)
____(8) Special Student
12. How long were you enrolled before you left school? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)
(✓)
____(1) Less than one semester
____(2) One semester, but less than one year
____(3) One year or more, but less than two years
____(4) Two years or more, but less than three years
____(5) Three years or more
13. How many months has it been since you withdrew from school? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)
(✓)
____(1) One month or less
____(2) Two to six months
____(3) Seven months to one year
____(4) More than one year

14. What was your status at the time you left? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)

(✓)

- ☐ (1) Freshman
- ☐ (2) Sophomore
- ☐ (3) Junior
- ☐ (4) Senior
- ☐ (5) Graduate or Professional School Student
- ☐ (6) Special Student

15. During the last two semesters (or less) that you were enrolled, were you primarily:
(PLEASE CHECK ONE)

(✓)

- ☐ (1) A full-time student
- ☐ (2) A part-time student
- ☐ (3) Both during the last two semesters

16. During the last two semesters (or less) that you were enrolled were you employed in a job:
(PLEASE CHECK ONE)

(✓)

- ☐ (1) Not employed at all
- ☐ (2) Employed 1-10 hours/week
- ☐ (3) Employed 11-20 hours/week
- ☐ (4) Employed 21-35 hours/week
- ☐ (5) Employed 36 or more hours/week

17. Which of the following types of financial aid were you receiving at any time during the last two semesters (or less):

(CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

(✓)

- ☐ (1) None
- ☐ (2) Scholarship
- ☐ (3) Loan
- ☐ (4) Work/study
- ☐ (5) GI Bill
- ☐ (6) Other, (please specify) _____

18. What was your cumulative overall grade point average (GPA) at the time you left school (based on a 4.0 system)? (PLEASE FILL IN)

19. Were you ever on academic probation while enrolled? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)

(✓)

- ☐ (1) Yes
- ☐ (2) No

20. What was your last major? _____ If major undeclared, check here _____

21. How many different times did you change majors while enrolled? (PLEASE CHECK ONE)

(✓)

- ☐ (1) Never declared a major field of study
- ☐ (2) Never changed majors
- ☐ (3) One time
- ☐ (4) Two or more times

22. Listed below are several reasons why a student might leave school. To what extent are these your reasons for leaving this school? (CHECK THE APPROPRIATE RESPONSE)
(✓)

Major Reason	Moderate Reason	Minor Reason	Not A Reason
4	3	2	1

Academic

- (1) Low grades
- (2) Found courses too difficult
- (3) Inadequate study techniques or habits
- (4) Needed a temporary break from studies
- (5) Major or courses not available at this school
- (6) Unsure of major and needed to leave school to decide on possible careers
- (7) Course work not challenging
- (8) Learned what I came to learn
- (9) Dissatisfaction with major department

Employment

- (10) Conflict between job and studies
- (11) Accepted a job and didn't need more school
- (12) Went into military service
- (13) Couldn't find a job

Financial

- (14) Not enough money to go to school
- (15) Applied but could not obtain financial aid
- (16) Financial aid was not sufficient
- (17) Child care not available or too costly
- (18) This school too expensive

Personal Circumstances

- (19) Found study too time-consuming
- (20) Home responsibilities were too great
- (21) Illness, personal or family
- (22) Personal problems
- (23) Fulfilled my personal goals in schooling
- (24) Marital situation changed my education plans
- (25) Moved out of the area

Other. (please specify)

--	--	--	--

23. Please check the appropriate box describing your degree of satisfaction with the following aspects of the school you left.

	Degree of Satisfaction					Does Not Apply
	None	Little	Moderate	Much	Great	
(1) Counseling/guidance services	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(2) Academic advising services	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(3) Library services	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(4) Employment opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(5) Financial aid opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(6) Cost of attending this school	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(7) Enrollment size of this school	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(8) Rules and regulations at this school	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(9) Extra-curricular opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(10) Intellectual stimulation	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(11) Cultural opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(12) Social opportunities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(13) Religious environment	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(14) Recreational facilities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(15) Location of this school	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(16) Residence/living accommodations	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(17) Grading system	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(18) Course content in your major field	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(19) Teaching in your major field	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(20) Amount of contact with your teachers	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(21) Scheduling of classes	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(22) Relevance of your major field to your career goals	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(23) Information given to you about this school before enrolling	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(24) Quality of students	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
(25) The school in general	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

24. Please select from the list above three factors which, if changed for the better, would have most encouraged you to stay at (INSTITUTION). (LIST IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE)

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

25. What are you currently doing? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)
(✓)

_____ (1) Attending or plan to attend school soon	_____
_____ (2) Entered or plan to enter military service	_____ Name of Institution
_____ (3) Looking for a job	
_____ (4) Working in a job	
_____ (5) Caring for home and/or family	
_____ (6) Traveling	
_____ (7) Other, (please specify)	_____

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