

A STUDY OF CLIENT PERCEPTIONS OF THE
ST. JOHN'S WORK ACTIVITY PROJECT AND THE
PERCEIVED BENEFITS OF PROGRAM PARTICIPATION

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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A Study Of Client Perceptions Of The St. John's Work
Activity Project And The Perceived Benefits
Of Program Participation



by

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ABSTRACT

One of the greatest social problems in Canada today is unemployment. It is particularly difficult for young persons who may be considered socially disadvantaged to find employment. Various programs in this country and others have been developed to help the unemployed upgrade their academic skills and/or learn new skills which will enhance their ability to find work and become independent members of society.

This study describes such a program, The St. John's Work Activity project, and how it was perceived by social assistance recipients who participated in it. There were two purposes to the study:

- (1) to obtain the perceptions of participants about the program and their experiences in it and
- (2) to ascertain the perceived benefits of the program.

A random sample of 50 persons was selected from a population of 150 clients who attended The St. John's Work Activity Project. Data was collected from questionnaires administered to persons in their homes. In addition to the clients' perception and experiences of the program and how it benefitted them, the study instrument also provided a demographic profile of participants and a measure of their self-esteem and life satisfaction.

The results of the study showed that the St. John's Work Activity Project was perceived quite positively by the

participants as 72 percent reported they were very satisfied with the program. Eighty-four percent said they benefitted from the project and that their expectations were met. Among other things the data also showed that while these persons may be considered to be socially and economically disadvantaged, they appear to be reasonably happy, have high self-esteem and enjoy significant social contact and support from family and friends.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Today's society faces many social problems but perhaps none greater than unemployment. The prevalence of this problem is such that people can rarely escape its reality. It is unusual to listen to the news on radio or television, or to read a newspaper without some reference to unemployment in the Western world, including Canada and particularly Atlantic Canada. The concept of poverty is relative and while Canadians do not see the vivid pictures of starving children here as in some third world countries, the effects of poverty are nonetheless felt throughout this land as the plight of prairie farmers, Atlantic fishermen, the native peoples, and the urban poor is made known on a daily basis and reflected in the unemployment statistics, which for February 1989 was 8.3 percent nationally and 16.3 percent for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador (Newfoundland Statistics Agency, Executive Council, March 1989).

In economists' terms unemployment is the result of a gap between the demand for jobs and the supply of labor or the number of people seeking the available jobs. (Report of the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 1986).

There are basically four types of unemployment, according to Sherraden (1985):

1. Frictional unemployment which is caused by short-term

labor market maladjustments, such as seasonal fluctuations and time spent between jobs.

2. Cyclical unemployment which is caused by labor demand deficiency during the recessionary phase of the business cycle. As economic activity declines, unemployment rises. In other words, cyclical unemployment is the unemployment difference between peak and trough periods in the cycle.
3. Chronic unemployment which refers to labor demand deficiency above and beyond cyclical fluctuations and labor demand deficiency which persists even when times are good.
4. Structural unemployment which refers to a deeper and more long-lasting maladjustment in the labor market. A lack of work is due to structural imbalance between the demand for and supply of labor, usually as a result of a failure of the economy to accommodate to changes within the system such as geographic relocation of industry, changes in technology, and shifts in consumer demand.

A traditional view of unemployment, and one which is still held by some people today, is that certain groups of people are unemployed because of personal deficiencies, such as insufficient skills, inappropriate attitudes, and/or a disinclination to work or laziness. Studies conducted on young unemployed persons indicate that even the subjects attributed their unemployment to personal failure. (Schneider, 1977 , Wilcox et.al. 1980). With high unemployment rates, however, more writers are coming to realize that it is not caused by individual failure as much as by social and economic systems. While governments have addressed each kind of unemployment listed above, in realizing that large numbers of people are out of work through no fault of their own, most Western Nations have

emphasized "structural" unemployment in its efforts to help society's most disadvantaged members. As Young (1985:18) has said "the more unemployment is seen as a structural problem in the economy, the more governments are expected to assume responsibility for its cause through their macro-economic policies".

The most obvious and direct effect of unemployment is the loss of income which permits the purchase of the necessities of life such as food, clothing, and shelter, but there are other effects which impact negatively upon the unemployed. Borrero (1981:129), in discussing the price of unemployment, says "we pay for unemployment in terms of increases in crimes, suicides, emotional disturbances, immorality, juvenile delinquents, alcoholism, and violence against women and children." The Committee for Economic Development (1978:28) in referring to a study conducted at the Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health states that there is "a strong correlation between higher unemployment rates and increases in mental disorders, heart disease, alcoholism, homicide rates, and suicide among adults and in infant and maternal mortality." Feather and Barber (1983) refer to the effects of unemployment as lower self-esteem, anxiety, self-blame, anger, lower motivation to work, lower life satisfaction and a sense of helplessness.

These findings, however do not necessarily hold true for Newfoundland. For example, despite an unemployment rate

during the 1970's which was almost twice the national average, The Economic Council of Canada (1980:XI) noted "that in comparison to the more privileged provinces - Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario - this province has a lower incidence of suicide, homicide, divorce, mental illness, and mortality due to cirrhosis of the liver".

Why do people need employment or work? Work, generally, will negate many of the effects of unemployment for most people but it can do more. Today, much personal meaning, identity, and self-worth is associated with work and through employment people feel part of their community and society. Some unemployed people who were interviewed by the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment had these comments about work:

"I don't think anybody works just for the money. We need to work for ourselves...I need to work to keep my sanity. I don't need a lot of material things, but I need to work."

"Work gives you a certain amount of your self-confidence and your esteem...and I like meeting people. It's peace of mind and you learn something."

"I put a lot of value on work. It's very belittling to say I don't work... First you get lazy, and then your mind starts to go soft."

"It takes every bit of life out of you. Since I have been out of work, I lost every bit of self-confidence and every bit of everything. It brings you down to the lowest level. You got no respect for yourself anymore. You feel useless. It's a hard road." (Building on Our Strengths: Report of the Royal Commission on Employment and Unemployment, 1983:290)

What these people are saying is that work is a means of fulfilling their physical, mental, and emotional needs.

There are some theories about work and the fulfillment of needs. Abraham Maslow (1968) describes needs in a hierarchy. Needs at the lower levels of the hierarchy (physiological and safety needs) must be met before those at the higher levels (love and belonging, self-esteem, and self-actualization) can be met. Many people do not realize the extent to which work meets their needs until they become unemployed. They then have to move down the hierarchy and have to be concerned with addressing the more basic or physiological needs that had been previously taken for granted.

The Institute for Social and Economic Research (1985) refers to Toffler's theory of human needs. Toffler describes human needs in three general categories: a need for community, a need for meaning, and a need for structure. Work provides social interaction that people need and working persons often form a significant component of a "community". For some people these fellow workers represent the largest group of others with whom they interact and form the basis of their social network.

As for the need for meaning, one study (Borgen and Amundson, 1984) reported that work provides a significant component in defining who a person is and how valuable one is perceived to be. Being out of work and looking for a job

tends to reinforce notions of worthlessness and lack of ability.

Toffler's third category refers to the need people have for structure in their lives. Many people, when they first become unemployed, schedule their days so that they treat looking for work as a job in itself. They spend their time preparing resumes and arranging interviews. However, with rejections and prolonged job search, it becomes more difficult to maintain this kind of regimen. People soon find themselves doing less and less with their time and several participants in Borgen and Amundson's study (1984) report that it took them all day to do what they used to do in half an hour.

While the structuring of time is also a problem for unemployed persons in Newfoundland (boredom has been identified as a difficulty for young people in particular (Hill, 1983), the serious effects of unemployment are probably not felt as keenly here because of seasonal nature of work. For generations Newfoundlanders who worked in the primary industries such as fishing and forestry, experienced seasonal employment. In recent years government has adopted a strategy of creating make work projects that employ people for periods long enough to qualify them for Unemployment Insurance Benefits. During 1987 approximately 15,000 social assistance recipients were employed on such projects. Regular periods of unemployment are a fact of life for many

people in this province. They do not, however, experience the same degree of stress as do people in larger urban-industrialized centres who are either laid off or have their jobs declared redundant. It is common for people in Newfoundland to know when they are going to be laid off and this enables them to anticipate their unemployed status and thus cope reasonably well with the stress so frequently experienced by workers in other areas. (Hill, 1983)

In Newfoundland, to be unemployed does not necessarily mean that a person is idle. Income generated during the fishing season ceases when people can no longer fish. While persons become officially unemployed they continue non income work such as gathering firewood and making repairs to their boats and fishing gear for the coming season. Women, employed primarily in fish plants during the fishing months, become full time homemakers and welcome the opportunity to attend the needs of their families. A person's status, therefore, is determined not so much by paid employment as it is by one's reputation as a hard worker who takes advantage of all available opportunities to enhance their standard of living. (Hill, 1983)

Statement of the Problem

Unemployment is one of the most serious problems facing the province of Newfoundland and Labrador today. The seasonal nature of work for many people with the resultant effects on both the economy and people is a great concern to

government and to the population generally. One of the ways of responding to unemployment is the development of training programs that provide skills or increase existing skills of the unemployed.

The problem being addressed by training programs is one which views unemployment amongst public assistance recipients as being caused by lack of adequate preparation or skills to take employment in the private or public sector. The reasons for this may vary from lack of opportunity to study or learn to personal feelings of low self-esteem and limited self-confidence.

While it has been well documented (Ballou, 1977; Butler, 1980; Rein, 1982) that most able-bodied public assistance recipients work whenever jobs are available, such jobs are usually found in the "periphery" sector of the economy (The Report of the Working Party on Employment Strategy, 1974) where work is menial in nature, wages are low, and employment only lasts a short time. This is very true for social assistance recipients in Newfoundland who depend to a great degree on government sponsored projects.

Since it is now generally recognized that unemployment is caused to a significant degree by structural changes in the economy (Watts, 1983) rather than the fault of the individuals it is incumbent on governments, and the private sector, to design programs that provide unemployed persons with the necessary academic qualifications, technical and

life skills to accept work opportunities of a long term nature when they become available.

Today's technological society will probably not provide work for everyone. Sherraden (1985:5) says that "the problem of chronic unemployment has increased through the 1970's and early 1980's and is likely to remain a serious problem in the years ahead..." The planning and development of good training programs that prepare public assistance recipients for work will increase their chances of securing and maintaining meaningful employment. The problem or challenge, therefore, is to enable people to take advantage of work opportunities that become available in a society where traditional occupations such as fishing are diminishing due to improved technology.

Work Activity Projects

One of Canada's responses to the chronically unemployed was the development and implementation of Work Activity Projects. The legislative authority for this initiative was given through Part III of the Canada Assistance Plan (1966) which made provisions for social assistance recipients who are unable to secure or retain employment because of personal, family or social problems. This part of the Act specifically addresses the need for rehabilitation for these people and provides the resources for the establishment of appropriate programs.

Assumptions

Work Activity can be viewed in the broad context of a social rehabilitation program and is seen to be based upon certain assumptions. These are:

- a) That many persons remain financially dependent because they are unable to benefit from the more traditional programs.
- b) That these persons want to work, but in order to be employable, need to acquire new attitudes and modes of behavior which will improve their employment prospects.
- c) That in order to be employable, persons need not only a trade or some occupational skill, but also they need to be free enough from any personal problems that may interfere with their social functioning.
- d) That work may be a therapeutic value and can be used to provide learning opportunities.
- e) That some persons may acquire the attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to become employable, through a comprehensive approach to employment rehabilitation. (Guidelines on Work Activity Project Submissions , Part III, Canada Assistance Plan, 1982)

Objectives

The specific objectives of Work Activity Projects are:

- the return to the labor market of long term unemployed people;
- the preparation of project participants for entry into technical and vocational training programs. (Guidelines on Work Activity Project Submissions, Part III, Canada Assistance Plan, 1982)

Project Description - General

Work Activity Projects are a combination of work exposure and work experience situations, counselling, life

skills and other welfare services designed to provide a comprehensive approach to social rehabilitation and to resolve the personal, family, or environmental problems that may be faced by the unemployed. Maybe the best way to describe the Work Activity Projects is to state what they are not.

Work Activity is not vocational rehabilitation. While Work Activity helps to prepare for vocational training, if this is what the person's career plan is, the focus is on resolving personal problems that are obstacles to technical training or employability.

Work Activity is not on-the-job training which has for its purpose the teaching and learning of a trade or occupation. Unlike on-the-job training, Work Activity is not considered to be employment but is a program of preparation for employment.

Work Activity is not sheltered employment since in a sheltered employment situation the intent is to provide work in a protective environment for handicapped persons. Again, Work Activity is not employment but a social rehabilitation program.

While employment may be the ultimate goal, it is recognized that for some of the chronically unemployed there are a number of steps that should first be taken or barriers removed before this can be achieved. The purpose of Work Activity programs is to teach life skills and appropriate

work habits to social assistance recipients to enhance their chance of employment whereby they may lead more independent and satisfying lives.

Target Population

The definition of a Work Activity Project, in terms of the participants, under Section 14(a) of the Canada Assistance Plan (1982) is as follows:

- 1) persons in need or likely to become in need;
- 2) persons faced with unusual difficulty in finding employment or in benefiting from training programs;
- 3) persons whose difficulty is related to personal, family or environmental problems.

Since the intention is to help these persons be prepared to hold employment or to benefit from training programs, it follows that the objective is to assist in the resolution of problems which preclude employment. Some of these problems include: loss of hope of finding employment, feelings of inadequacy, poor self image, a lack of motivation, marital problems, poor housing, lack of education, and poor work habits. The Work Activity concept was developed on the premise that in order to become financially independent many people within the target population need assistance in acquiring new skills and attitudes to help them become gainfully employed.

Agreement with the Provinces and Requirements of Legislation

Each province has entered into an agreement with the Federal Government under Part III of the Canada Assistance Plan whereby Work Activity projects can be funded on a 50/50 cost sharing basis. For new projects the federal government requires that a specific and planned proposal be submitted outlining a work component, counselling, life skills and other welfare services, target population, a budget, and program objectives. For existing projects, an up-to-date submission along with an annual budget and report is required. An advantage to the planned design, as a requirement, means that the legislation only imposes a framework which is flexible enough to adapt to a variety of individuals.

St. John's Work Activity Project: An Overview

The St. John's Work Activity Project began in 1976 because there were increasingly high numbers of people on social assistance and a concern existed for those recipients who appeared destined to remain on social assistance for a long time unless more services, other than financial, were offered. The Department of Social Services, therefore, decided to develop a Work Activity Project based on the guidelines under Part III of the Canada Assistance Plan.

During the first few years emphasis was placed on male heads of households although the project never served one

group of people exclusively. Later the groups were composed of mostly single parents and now the majority of the participants are single people. The length of the project also varied over the years. When the first project started it ran for six months and had thirty participants. Since 1986 the program has run for three months and has accommodated twenty people. Recipients attended the project on a voluntary basis and received an incentive allowance of \$175.00 in addition to their social assistance allowance. The geographic area served by the project was the City of St. John's and communities served by the St. John's District Offices of the Department of Social Services as well as the communities served by the Kelligrews District Office and Bell Island. The staff of these offices were informed about the project primarily through visits by the project director and staff social worker to explain the philosophy and objectives of "work activity". Workers were also encouraged to visit the project themselves and see what "work activity" involved and how it could benefit their clients.

Most efforts to obtain referrals were made from the Department of Social Services because the people for whom the project was designed were mostly clients of that Department. Over the years 90 percent or more of the participants were clients of the Department of Social Services with the remainder coming from hospitals and other community agencies. (Monthly Reports of the St. John's Work

Activity Project, Department of Social Services)

The St. John's Work Activity Project is comprised of three components. The first is a life skills course conducted in a classroom setting. Two work shops (carpentry and upholstery) comprise the second component and supportive social work services to the participant and his/her family is the third component. A job placement officer is also an integral part of the project. This person contacts employers in the community in an effort to secure jobs for participants in addition to teaching creative job search techniques.

When the Project began both male and female participants attended one of the two workshops but after a few years the experience did not prove to be particularly constructive for females, because they did not find the shops very interesting. As a result in 1982 females were no longer required to attend "shop". The idea of "job stations" was then introduced and this has been working very well over the past five years (Monthly Reports of the St. John's Work Activity Project, Department of Social Services). The women still participate in life skills but when the men go to "shop", they go out into the community and spend the equivalent amount of time with local employers.

Purpose of Study and Research Questions

Since the St. John's Work Activity Project began in

1976, some 750 Social Assistance recipients have gone through the program. In order to plan future programs that meet the needs of recipients it is important to find out the perceptions of the participants about their experiences in the program and the benefits, if any, which they feel they obtained from it.

There are two main purposes of this study. The first is to obtain the perceptions of clients about their experiences in the program. Traditionally, poor people have not been involved in planning employment or training programs in which they have been participants. Programs were designed by bureaucrats and the people were fitted into them without much, if any, consultation. Smith (1970:14) says "listen to the poor. Don't ask them to do all the changing...involve the poor". To what extent were people listened to during their participation in this project? Did anyone ever ask them for their opinions, ideas, or suggestions? If Smith's advice is to be taken seriously with participants contributing to the planning of future programs, their views on the various components or characteristics of the current program as well as their perception of the staff is desirable.

Questions on client perceptions of the program are covered in Section F of a questionnaire constructed by the writer. This questionnaire (Appendix A) explores such areas as the structure of the program in terms of which components

did clients learn most from, relationships between staff and participants, perceptions of the skill of staff members, and the degree of participants "feeling welcome" during the orientation period.

The second purpose of this study is to ascertain the perceived benefits of the program. What did people get out of it? Was it helpful to them in securing or searching for employment, or did it enhance their personal lives in some way? The questions addressing this area of interest are found in Section F of the questionnaire (see Appendix A).

Demographic data about participants will also be obtained. The intent of the study is not only to describe the client's perceptions of the program and to report the perceived benefits from participation, but also to determine information about participants' self-esteem and life satisfaction. Relationships between self-esteem and life satisfaction, and people's perceptions of the program and the benefits they thought they derived from participation will be explored. It will also be relevant to see how certain demographic variables are related to the concept of self-esteem. In order to measure participants' level of self-esteem, and life satisfaction two standardized scales will be used: Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (1965) and the Cornell Personal Adjustment Scale (Thompson, Strelb and Kosa, 1960).

Arising from the purposes of the study the following

research question may be formulated. What are the participants' perceptions of the St. John's Work Activity Project and the benefits derived from participating in the program?

CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

This is a study of a random sample of social assistance recipients who attended a social rehabilitation or work preparation program in order to increase their employability for the work force. The review of the literature will focus on client perceptions of such programs, the services received, and any perceived benefits accruing to the participants. The various types of training programs that have been developed to meet the needs of public assistance clients, and the impact that they have had will also be discussed as well as some of the characteristics attributed to people who participate in training programs.

Characteristics of Public Assistance Recipients

Much has been written about the poor and people who comprise the lower economic levels of society who find themselves in receipt of public assistance. The concept of poverty, with which the poor are quite familiar, almost always contains within it negative stereotypes. Some of these stereotypes include the belief that the poor are lazy, that they are not motivated to work, that they are not willing to take responsibility, that they have no aspirations for the future, that they do not respect the property of others, that they drink too much, and that they engage in criminal behaviour. The poor have even been

labelled as being "culturally disadvantaged". (Cull and Hardy, 1973:6)

While the term "culturally disadvantaged" may be ambiguous, people who are deprived may be considered to be those who are the products of a culture that has not provided them with the motivation, opportunities, experiences, and relationships that enhance their chances for competing successfully with their fellow citizens.

Why is there so much poverty in countries such as the United States and Canada where the standard of living is among the highest in the world? There are a couple of theories which attempt to explain this phenomenon and show why the values, attitudes, and behaviour, of the poor appear to be different from those of the middle-class.

One theory is the concept of a "culture of poverty". Oscar Lewis (1968), who first used the term, explained it as:

"... a label for a specific conceptual model that describes in positive terms a subculture of Western Society with its own structure and rationale, a way of life handed on from generation to generation along family lines. The culture of poverty is not just a matter of deprivation or disorganization, a term signifying the absence of something. It is a culture in the traditional anthropological sense in that it provides human

beings with a design for living, with ready-made set of solutions for human problems..." (406)

In discussing Lewis' model of poverty, Valentine (1968) places the traits or characteristics listed by Lewis into three categories. The first set of traits consists of gross indicators of poverty which are unemployment, underemployment, unskilled work, low-status occupations, meager wages, lack of education, crowded living conditions and deteriorated housing.

The second group of traits presented by Lewis consists of behavioral patterns and relationships. These include practice of consensual marriage, high frequency of female-centered households without resident adult males, absence of a sheltered childhood, authoritarianism in family relationships, lack of family solidarity, a general failure to develop community organization beyond the household, concern with toughness and masculinity and inability or unwillingness to defer gratification.

The third set of elements that can be drawn from the trait list associated with the "culture of poverty" belongs to the realm of values and attitudes. In this category Valentine places hostile feelings towards institutions such as alienation, powerlessness, apathy, insecurity, suspicion, and various expressions of spacial and temporal provincialism. The elements can be summed up as a combination of potential for protest together with low

levels of expectation and aspiration. While most writers agree with many of the characteristics of socially disadvantaged people as described by Lewis there is no consensus as to these being simply attributes of culture.

An alternative conceptual framework to the "culture of poverty" is referred to as "Individual Adaptation" (Lewis, 1971). This approach states that values held by the poor are a natural response to the realities of their situation. Gladwin (1967), for example, sees lower class values or life styles as a response to the facts of being poor. In quoting Roach and Gursslin (1967), M.V. Lewis (1971:23) says "material deprivation leads to social deprivation, eventually resulting in social-psychological inadequacies which show themselves as lower-class values or life styles".

The theory of individually learned adaptive values on the part of the poor, as differentiated from the "culture of poverty" theory, explains some of the controversial and apparently contradictory findings on the status or situation of the poor. For example, it is suggested that while the poor do accept middle-class values (Rodman, 1965) there is a discrepancy between their stated values and their actual behaviour which leads them to accept or tolerate things that the middle-class do not.

The negative experiences of a person's early environment combined with a continuous series of failures are good examples of how poor people come to possess the

characteristics which set them apart from the so called middle-class. The poor child is raised in an environment which, when compared to that of the middle-class child, is lacking in variety of visual, tactile, and auditory stimulation. These conditions are not conducive to the child's success in school so frustration, apathy and rebellion may result from his lack of achievement. According to a study by Bloom, Davis, and Hess (1965), as quoted in Lewis (1971), ratings of deprived children of the first grade show marked decreases in initiative, concentration, responsiveness to adult teachers and effectiveness of work habits. Thus, psychological characteristics which cause employment problems for the poor are evident even at ages of six and seven. This attitude leads them to drop out of school and enter the labour market, if they can find work. Their lack of education leaves them so handicapped because of low wages they are unable to support a family.

In summary, the "culture of poverty" model contains the implication that changing economic circumstances through the development of adequately paying jobs and providing basic services in the area of health, housing and transportation will be to no avail because the poor have been socialized into a different system of values and they will not be able to take advantage of these increased opportunities. (Van Til, 1976) The "individual adaptation" model or

"situational" model contends the opposite by saying that once the social environment of the poor is changed, their behaviour will quickly come to resemble that of the middle class. Authors such as Liebow, Hannerz, Valentine, and Kriesberg, as quoted in Van Til (1976) have concluded that the culture of poverty model does not apply to the majority of poor persons in the United States and that the adaptation or situational model more adequately explains the characteristics of the poor. There is no reason to believe that the Adaptation Model would be any less applicable to Canadians.

Although these two broad theoretical frameworks (culture of poverty and adaptation model) are divergent they are not totally exclusive, (Lewis:1968). Writers who support each theory agree that certain characteristics such as low education, inadequate housing and not being part of the community at large, apply to a majority of the poor; they disagree mostly on the values and attitudes attributed to poor persons and the implication that these factors are the cause of their plight. Both these models have contributed to our understanding about why people are poor and the theoretical framework that one prefers is largely a matter of emphasis.

Myths and Assumptions

Some of the characteristics ascribed to public assistance recipients have been refuted as myths and

incorrect assumptions. It is assumed, for example, that welfare recipients prefer dependency to work and that they need stimulus to seek employment. This is refuted by the fact that millions of poor families continue to work without clear prospects of economic security (Schiller, 1973:26). Studies have shown that in America over three-quarters of recipients who received Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) have worked at some time prior to receipt of assistance and that approximately one-fourth are currently in the labor force (Rein, 1982, McIntosh, 1980). This indicates that there is a high motivation among welfare mothers to work and that they do work whenever possible (Ballou, 1977). Butler (1980) reports that there is considerable movement within welfare caseloads which means that many people do not remain on public assistance for long periods of time but accept work whenever it is available. As indicated previously, approximately 15000 social assistance recipients in Newfoundland were employed on work projects in one year. Due to lack of adequate incentives some of these people, particularly single parents who were renting, were actually worse off by accepting employment. Even among long-term recipients, employment and welfare are not exclusive choices. For example, AuClaire (1979) found that out of 50 million women between the ages of 18 and 54, only 7 million will receive welfare in any one year out of ten. Rein (1982) found that among current AFDC female heads only

25 percent have never worked. It is a fallacy to believe, therefore, that poor people do not want to work.

Another assumption is the belief that jobs exist for all recipients who are ready and able to work. Empirical studies (Schiller 1973), suggest that there is a tremendous gap between public expectations and labour market realities. From an aggregate perspective, the assumption of job availability appears inappropriate. With the current unemployment rates in Canada (8.6 percent nationally and 15.1 percent in Newfoundland as of March, 1989) it is naive to assume that job vacancies exist for all those in receipt of social assistance.

A third assumption is the notion or belief that public assistance recipients have plenty of money and are on welfare only to acquire more. Cull and Hardy (1973) report that federally-financed public programs in the United States supply less than enough support to maintain people at the poverty level. The same holds true for Canada where people have to turn to food banks because of the inadequate rates of assistance received from provincial governments. In a Position Statement to the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (Levey, Kimberley, and Stones, 1989:4) stated that "up to 10 percent of families in St. John's used food banks last year" and "one child in four in Newfoundland is affected by poverty and hunger". The belief that public assistance recipients have plenty of money is certainly a

myth.

A final assumption is that the poor are an homogeneous group or that they are "all alike". While poor people share certain common characteristics they should not be stereotyped as homogeneous for they actually comprise several groups such as the young, the old, single parents, the unskilled, and minorities (Somers, 1968). One thing that many poor people have in common, however, is a developmental background of poor circumstances and/or poor environment.

Studies have shown that poor people are basically no different from other people. They are motivated to work and do work whenever possible, and they have virtually the same aspirations as the employed (Loewenberg, 1981). Some of the unemployed, however, such as the people who attended the St. John's Work Activity Project, have problems which preclude them from taking work and it is the role of society to help them in the resolution of these problems to the point where employment is possible.

Historical Overview of Training and Employment Programs

There has not been much literature from Canada on training programs for the unemployed. Most of the studies have been completed on programs in the United States and for this reason the literature reviewed in this section will refer mostly to American studies.

Prior to the 1930's policies in the United States for

assisting the poor and unemployed were deeply grounded in the British Poor Law (Palmer, 1980). Private groups, church-related organizations, and the extended family shared in the responsibility of caring for the poor with the federal government playing virtually no role in providing help. The same can also be said for Canada (Guest, 1985).

The American federal government first became involved in employment and training programs during the Great Depression. With unemployment at about 25 percent it was clear that a new role for government was required (Sherraden, 1985). Much of the emphasis during this period was on long-term public service employment, such as the Works Progress Administration (WPA) and Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). In Britain the Youth Opportunities Program (YOP) was devised to increase youth employment by improving their employability (Fiddy, 1983). That country also has Work Experience Employer's Premises (WEEP), Work Experience Program (WEP), and Work Introduction Courses (WIC).

After this initial involvement in the labor market, the period from the early 1940's to the late 1950's saw little government intervention because there was almost full employment in the United States and Canada. Only in the early 1960's when books such as Harrington's The Other America drew attention to the reality of poverty did public employment programs once again receive widespread attention.

This second phase had a much different emphasis (and life-span) than did the first. It grew out of a concern for workers who had been displaced by technological advances as well as a concern over employment bottlenecks that these advances generated. The Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), passed in 1962 in the United States, was originally designed to provide vocational and on the job training for displaced workers. Initially, the program primarily served male heads of households with substantial previous labor market experience. However, the emphasis of the program quickly changed to meet the needs of more disadvantaged individuals or those described as having "hardcore" unemployment problems.

This shift in emphasis ushered in the third phase of the United States' Government's involvement, coinciding with the implementation of the Great Society programs and lasting through the early 1970's. Employment and training programs were increasingly targeted at minorities, welfare recipients, low income youth, the elderly, and other hard-to-employ groups. Emphasis was also placed on broader non-skilled types of programs and was involved in the area of attitude development and occupational survival skills such as problem solving, human relations, decision making, and effective communications. They were also trying to create as many jobs with small businesses as possible for the unemployed. According to Birch (1979:152) "on the average

about 60 percent of all jobs in the U.S. are generated by firms with 20 or fewer employees..." There were many programs for a variety of unemployed people during this period some of which included: Job Corps, Neighborhood Youth Corps, Operations Mainstream, New Careers, Concentrated Employment Program, Older Americans, Model Cities, Foster Grandparents, and the Work Incentive Program. These programs provided work experience and training (both on-the-job and in the classroom), with the intention of improving the long-term employability of participants and providing career ladders for moving from temporary public sector jobs to permanent jobs in the private sector (Bassi and Ashenfelter, 1985).

With the recession of 1970-71, public attention began to shift from the long-term employability problems of the public assistance recipients to the problems of the cyclically unemployed. The chronically unemployed, however, were not forgotten. Provisions were made for targeting a variety of groups including: Vietnam veterans, youth, elderly, migrants, non English speaking persons, and welfare recipients. In addition, a limited amount of money was made available for training. The passage of the Emergency Employment Act represents the beginning of the fourth phase of federal involvement in employment and training policy. This phase, which continued through 1978, was characterized by a mixed strategy that attempted to combat both cyclical

and structural employment.

This strategy continued with the passage of the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) in 1973, which consolidated many of the training programs of the late 1960's and early 1970's and also incorporated the Public Employment Program. When CETA began, unemployment was well below its 1971 peak, and its original emphasis was clearly on training rather than employment (Bassi and Ashenfelter, 1985).

During this period employment and training programs were very well-funded and considerable experimentation was being undertaken. It was during this time that a wide variety of alternative policies were used on a trial basis. The first of these was the Supported Work Demonstration, one of the few employment/ training programs operated as an experiment with a randomly selected control group involving long-term AFDC recipients, ex-addicts, ex-offenders, and young school dropouts. Supported Work Demonstration was distinguished from other programs by its' emphasis on gradually bringing individuals with extreme employment disabilities into the labour market by using peer group support, graduated stress, and close supervision as program techniques (Gueron, 1980).

In late 1982, CETA was replaced by the Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA) which emphasized combating structural rather than cyclical unemployment. No funds were made

available for any form of direct job creation despite the fact that the unemployment rate had reached double-digit levels while the JTPA legislation was being created. The administration under President Reagan opposed direct job creation in the public sector, believing strongly that the only federal responsibility is to provide training for chronically unemployed (Bassi and Ashenfelter, 1985).

During the past few years interest in "workfare" programs has been growing in the United States (Sklar, 1986) but unlike programs in the past, people are often given choices as to work, upgrading, or training. Day care services and transportation allowances are also provided to facilitate participation. Although many of these workfare programs seem to be working well they have not been operational long enough for one to be definitive about their success.

In Canada, prior to the early 1960's there were no rehabilitation programs or specific job strategies for the "unemployed employables". At a meeting of First Ministers in Ottawa, however, in August 1964, the matter was discussed in response to the concern about the financial burden of social assistance programs and the consequences of long term unemployment. It was from the conference that the concept of "Work Activity" as a social rehabilitation program emerged.

More recently, (1986), the federal government developed

a new program called the Canadian Job Strategy. This voluntary, cost-shared program between Ottawa and the provinces described its purpose as being "to improve the employment prospects of long term welfare recipients through training and work experience, and to provide wage subsidies to small businesses and organizations doing contract work" (Health and Welfare Canada Press Clippings, May 1986). As of May 1987, five provinces had signed agreements with Ottawa to participate and these programs are currently being implemented across the country.

The Impact of Employment and Training Programs

The purpose of employment and training programs is to provide job training and employment opportunities for economically disadvantaged, unemployed, and/or underemployed persons which will result in an increase in their earned income (Gay and Borus, 1980). The overall impression given by the literature is that programs have not been an overwhelming success or a complete failure in terms of their ability to increase the long-term employment and earnings of disadvantaged workers.

During the past two decades, billions of dollars have been spent on employment and training programs and much has been spent on research and evaluation. Most of the American studies conducted could not categorically state the results of programs, in terms of effectiveness, largely because they did not use control groups. One study examined the impact

of a program on participants' post-program employment and earnings was estimated by comparing their pre- and post-program experience, with no regard for the effect on the passage of time, or changing economic conditions (Bassi and Ashenfelter, 1985).

One of the first evaluations of a major program in the United States, the Manpower Development and Training Act (MDTA), was conducted by Ashenfelter (1978). Using a comparison group from the Continuous Work History Sample, he estimated the effect of participation in classroom training for all participants who entered the MDTA program during the first three months of 1964. The outcome measure of program participation was annual Social Security earnings in the first five post-program years. It was found that MDTA classroom training did indeed have a positive and statistically significant effect on participants' earnings ranging from \$200.00 per annum for white males up to about \$550.00 for black females. This result was supported by a number of studies, (Borus, 1980) which found that women on welfare seem to gain approximately \$500.00 in the first year after completing an adult work-experience program. When reviewed in relationship to their costs, classroom training, on-the-job training, and work-experience programs appear to yield benefits sufficient to justify the programs for five years. In reviewing the Supported-Work Experiment, Gueron, as cited in Ginzberg (1980:91) found that the "program

concept was most successful for the AFDC women, a substantial number of whom benefitted from it, both as a sheltered introduction to work while they were in the program and as a bridge to unsubsidized employment".

Westat (1979) has done the only major analysis of the net earnings impact of the Public Employment Program (PEP). The Current Population Survey (CPS) was used with matched Social Security earnings files to generate comparison groups for PEP participants. Using both an autoregressive earnings model and a comparison of mean earnings between participants and comparison, Westat came to similar conclusions as did Ashenfelter. While in-program earnings gains were substantial for all groups, women generally experienced greater post-program gains than did men; the gains were also larger for minorities than whites. Dickinson, et. al., (1986) also supported this finding.

In another major American program, the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), Bassi (1983) also found that women benefit more financially from program participation than do men.

It was also found that the individuals who benefitted the most from CETA participation were those with the least amount of previous labor market experience (Bassi and Ashenfelter, 1985); Schiller (1978). This suggests that CETA was successful in preparing participants for entry level positions.

The best known program designed to address the employability of youth in the United States is probably the Job Corps which services disadvantaged youth from ages 12 to 21. This program involves very intensive evaluations of the factors which prevent each participant from accepting employment and provides extensive services, such as individual and group counselling, vocational training and GED courses.

There have been two major evaluations of the Job Corps (Cain, 1968 and Mallar et. al., 1980). Both studies have found very significant increases in employment and earnings, and reduction in welfare dependence. This finding is also supported by Hudgins (1986:18) who found that "recipients with training showed a reduction in public assistance dependency..."

Other studies also attest to the success of training and employment programs. In an evaluation of the Welfare, Employment, Education and Training (WEET) program in Maine, Petit and Wilcox (1986), found that since 1982, 4500 AFDC recipients had completed the program and after one to two years that 66 percent were working. Atkins (1986) found that 86 percent of the recipients who came off welfare in Massachusetts because of participation in the Employment Training Program (ETP) were still employed one year later. Since the inception of the Employment Preparation Program (EPP) in California in 1982, 46 percent of the participants

have found permanent, private-sector jobs at an average starting wage of \$5.07 per hour. (Bacon, 1986)

In a study of a job creation program by Canada Employment and Immigration (1983:11), it was reported that "the evaluation findings for Canada Community Development Projects (CCDP) strongly indicate that, in terms of its immediate impact, it provided significant employment for individuals who would not otherwise have been employed in the absence of the program". Another study by Canada Employment and Immigration (1985) entitled An Evaluation of the Program for the Employment Disadvantaged concluded that overall, the PED program appears to have met important needs of the employment disadvantaged.

Not all studies were positive about the impact of employment and training programs. Gay and Borus (1980) noted that there is very little evidence that post program placement is correlated with long term success. Main (1968) in discussing the MDTA program reported that the program had no demonstrable effect on income and that persons who had completed the program had about the same weekly wages as those who had not participated.

Most studies that have evaluated programs have considered post-program earnings to be the major criterion of success, and the evaluations have been completed, in most cases, from a few months to a year after the program ended. Even researchers who have reported positive results agree

that the success of training programs cannot be determined by only observing the immediate post-training status of participants but it depends on what happens to them over a long period of time. (Bassi 1983; Gay and Borus, 1980)

While the success of most training programs has been related to post program earnings, it should be noted that these programs were operated in large industrialized areas of North America where jobs were available for trainees with positive attitudes and demonstrated work skills. The environment, however, is much different in places such as Newfoundland where completion of a training program does not necessarily result in employment. Because of the lack of jobs both the sponsor and the client are aware that the program does not guarantee work. It is reasonable to assume, therefore, that social assistance recipients who attend training programs do so primarily to learn skills that will enhance their employability so that if work becomes available they will have a better chance of securing a job.

Client Perceptions of Services and Programs

The social service climate today is one of shrinking resources and increasing demands for accountability from those who provide services. Although more agencies and program sponsors are requiring evaluations, such analyses have been frequently made from the perspective of the professional staff within the agency or from an outside

expert rather than the viewpoint of the client or consumer, whose perceptions are rarely taken into account. Given the emphasis that is now being placed on accountability, it seems only appropriate that clients be asked to provide their opinions and perceptions as their input "increases diversity of perspectives", (Magura and Moses, 1984:100) which may lead to improvement in programs and services.

According to Giordano (1977) there are three reasons which have precipitated greater recognition of the client perspective. There has been an increase in collective efforts on the part of clients to increase their power and their greater visibility has undoubtedly been a factor in agency efforts to obtain the client viewpoint. Secondly, agencies may be increasingly aware that attainment of goals is facilitated by good agency-client relations. The third reason is the realization that their perceptions may provide some useful information which previously may not have been brought to light. Because many service agencies (especially public agencies) maintain a monopoly over the services they deliver, a coercive component to the client-worker relationship may be present where there are no checks on the quality of service being provided. The input into service and program through client perceptions could be a means of ensuring that such checks are placed on agencies.

Beck and Jones (1974) found that clients are an indispensable resource for the assessment of service

outcomes. Not only do they know considerably more than counsellors about the total range of changes that have occurred in their lives, but they also evaluate these changes from their own rather than the agency's perspective.

Clients also have other assets as reporters of change.

They are certainly a better resource than counsellors for information on changes in family members not seen by the counsellor, or changes in family relationships that are not directly discussed. They are the best ones who can report on their expectations, their reactions to service and agency policy, their unmet needs, and their relationship with the counsellor.

Giordano (1977) cites two advantages to client input into services. First, the use of the client' opinions about the service broadens the range of indices that attempt to quantify "agency effectiveness". For example, in evaluating the effectiveness of several rehabilitation programs, agencies have typically relied on such "hard" indicators as number of jobs secured. These statistics do not take into account the fact that there may have been an impact on the client in areas such as improvement in self-image, greater confidence, or improved relationships with family. The use of client perception of change in his/her own behavior and beliefs can, therefore, broaden the criteria of program effectiveness in terms of perceived benefits.

The second advantage of client input into services or

programs is that it can provide a basis for comparison with the more traditional approach - that of asking agency personnel to assess their own effectiveness in service provision. It is obvious that staff have a greater stake than clients in assessing the agency in a favorable light and for this reason many social programs have a requirement for evaluation. Who could more appropriately represent this "outside" view than the people who utilize the service or participate in agency programs?

While there have not been studies that reported specifically about client involvement or their perceptions of training and employment programs there have been such studies in other areas of social work. In a study of foster children placements in Illinois, Bush, Gordon and LeBailly (1977) showed how criteria generated from children could be used in determining the success of placements. The involvement of children in the service changed the emphasis from just looking at the merits of the child's own home, foster home, and institution to considering the variety of circumstances within types of placements showing the concerns of the child that are important to the success of the individual placements.

Bush, Gordon and LeBailly (1977) state that if the child can describe the characteristics of caretaking that he/she finds supportive the question of how many children are in foster care can be phrased "what types of foster

homes are perceived as nurturing?" Instead of asking "are foster homes better than institutions?" the question could be "what particular foster homes and what particular institutions provide the kind of care to which a child can respond?" The involvement of the children in the planning of services led to a different perspective on intervention and contributed to more successful placements.

A criticism of client input into services and programs is that client reports are invalid because they are subjective. This criticism is rejected by Bush, Gordon and LeBailly (1977:493) who indicate that "in order to be able to treat people as if they were human beings it must be possible to accept their commentaries upon their actions".

One of the primary reasons for having clients express their views about services or programs is to determine the degree of satisfaction derived from that service or program. While some people are dissatisfied with the services provided by social agencies the majority of clients who have been asked to give their opinions report that they are generally satisfied. Rubenstein and Block (1978) state that 69 percent of unmarried mothers who participated in a study on child welfare services said that there had been some problem solution or improvement. Shapiro (1979) in obtaining the opinions of 171 clients of a child protection service reported that as a whole, their overall response was favorable in more than two-thirds of the cases.

In another study of child protection services where client perceptions of outcomes were requested, Magura (1982) explored the degree of satisfaction that clients had with their workers and found that 62 percent were very satisfied. The high level of satisfaction with caseworkers found in Magura's study replicates that of Shapiro (1979), who reported that slightly over one-third of the respondents described their feelings about the main worker as initially and consistently positive; an equal proportion described feelings that changed from neutral or negative to positive; a minority (24 percent) held consistently negative or neutral attitudes.

The reasons given by Magura for clients being satisfied with their workers were empathy, genuineness, unconditional regard, and accessibility. Mayer and Timms (1970) also suggest that clients are satisfied because they were enlightened about their problems, and because they received guidance as to how these problems may be resolved. Magura says that the reasons given by the dissatisfied were unwanted advice, lack of skill by the worker, and inaccessibility.

In a study to obtain the perceptions of clients of a family service agency, Beck and Jones (1974) reported that clients were usually satisfied with the relationships with their counsellor. In fact 57 percent said they were very satisfied; another 27 percent said they were satisfied; only

5 percent were dissatisfied.

In discussing the benefits perceived by clients of child protection services, Magura (1982) reported that an improvement in self-confidence accompanied by an increased capacity to cope with feelings of life stress was the most frequent benefit cited. The change in self-image was found to be one of the most important benefits of the Supported Work Program reported by Danziger (1981).

In reporting the benefits of a job training and employment program Canada Employment and Immigration (1985) in its study, An Evaluation of the Program for the Employment Disadvantaged, reported that 68.1 percent of participants were satisfied with the job skills learned at the program. This concurs with the Saskatchewan Social Services Job Creation Impact Evaluation (1984) which reported that over one-half of the employees felt that they had learned a new skill that may help them get another job.

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

This exploratory study is designed to serve two purposes: to provide client perceptions of their experiences at the St. John's Work Activity Project, and to report the perceived benefits derived from participation in the program.

The data for the study was provided through a questionnaire (see Appendix A). Respondents were approached by telephone, or by letter if they did not have a phone, to request their participation. The questionnaire was administered in face-to-face interviews held in the homes of 50 randomly selected clients who participated in the program from February 1, 1984 to April 30, 1987.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was 150 individuals who participated in the St. John's Work Activity Project during the period February 1, 1984 to April 30, 1987, and who lived in the Greater St. John's area which included all communities under the jurisdiction of the three St. John's Social Services District Offices, as well as the Bell Island and Kelligrews District Offices.

A sample of 50 individuals was selected randomly through a table of random numbers. Some people within the sample did not wish to participate, or could not be located.

In these cases the person, or persons, selected next from the table of random numbers was invited to take part. This procedure was followed until a minimum of 50 persons agreed to participate.

Study Instrument

The instrument is a questionnaire comprising sixty-seven items and was administered in face-to-face interviews to 50 people. It is composed of several types of questions for the purpose of eliciting the maximum amount of relevant information in the most expeditious manner. The nature of some questions requires open ended responses while others are most suited to fixed alternative or Likert type responses. Some are contingency questions "where certain questions will be relevant to only some respondents and irrelevant to others". (Babbie, 1986:205)

Instrument construction drew upon the work of several authors who have done research in the various areas covered by this questionnaire. Questions in Sections A, C, and D were derived from the work of Bradburn and Caplovitz (1965) and Bradburn (1969) while Sections B and F were drawn from the work of Lewis (1971) and Sommers (1968).

Since the objective of the study was to obtain participants' perceptions of the St. John's Work Activity Project and the benefits they derived from it, Part F of the questionnaire was constructed specifically to elicit the relevant information. The participants were requested to

relate their experiences and give their views on all pertinent areas of the program as well as the perceived benefits. They were also asked in questions 62 to 66 to indicate their level of satisfaction with the program. This provided information on the client's overall perceptions of the project and how it could be changed to better meet the needs of people.

The first four sections of the questionnaire are concerned with demographic and personal information. Part A provides demographic information on the participants; Part B covers the work history and current employment status; Part C considers the person's living arrangements and the stability of and satisfaction with housing; and Part D explores the participants' social and support system including relationships with family and friends. Information on the participants' living arrangements and social support is deemed to be relevant because such data is associated with the happiness and life satisfaction of these clients. Self-esteem and life satisfaction will be measured to present a client profile and relationships between these concepts and participants' perceptions of the St. John's Work Activity Project will be explored.

Part E of the questionnaire comprises two standardized scales: Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965), and the Cornell Personal Adjustment Scale (Thompson, Streib and Kosa, 1960) which measures life satisfaction. Unlike

the other sections of the instrument, questions here are more attitudinal and require persons to indicate feelings about themselves and how satisfied they are with their lives.

Questions 32 to 38 are taken from the Self-Esteem scale as developed by M. Rosenberg (1965) and found in Mangen and Peterson (1982). Mangen and Peterson quote the use of this instrument by other authors, such as Kaplan and Pokorny (1969) and Silbert and Tippet (1965), and conclude that the instrument is a useful measure of global self-esteem.

The measure of life satisfaction is reflected in questions 39 to 47. These questions comprise the Cornell Personal Adjustment Scale (1960) and is also found in Mangen and Peterson (1987). This scale is composed of three separate indexes labeled satisfaction with life, dejection and hopelessness. It was used by Thompson, Streib, and Kosa (1960) and found to be appropriate for several population groups.

The rationale for incorporating these two scales into the study instrument is to provide a means by which the data from other sections of the questionnaire can be correlated. Client perception of the program and perceived benefits would not be as meaningful unless some statements could be made in relation to other aspects of client's lives, which in this case are self-esteem and life satisfaction.

The questionnaire was pre-tested with three persons

from the study population who had not been selected as part of the sample. Any resultant adjustments or changes were made prior to the interviews with the sample participants.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the participants' perceptions of the program and their views of how it benefitted them, frequency distributions and simple percentages were presented in a descriptive manner through the use of tables. The same method was used to present demographic and personal information. Cross tabulations were utilized to examine possible relationships which existed between levels of self-esteem and clients' perceptions and perceived benefits, and selected participant characteristics.

Ethical Considerations

This study was designed to ensure that participation was voluntary, that confidentiality was respected, and that the subjects did not suffer any psychological harm. Those persons who were selected for interviews and had telephones were contacted by phone. The researcher identified himself, explained the research project including the types of questions they would be expected to answer, how they had been selected, and requested an appointment. On arrival at the home of the participant the respondent was given a letter of explanation (Appendix B).

This letter clearly outlined the following:

- a) the purpose of the research;

- b) benefits envisaged;
- c) any inconveniences;
- d) tasks to be performed;
- e) rights of the subject, eg. the right to withdraw at any time without penalty; the right to confidentiality of personal information;
- f) risks involved;
- g) the name(s) of the person(s) or institution eliciting or receiving the consent.

There was also a statement assuring the respondent that participation in this study would have no effect on his/her present or future involvement with the Department of Social Services.

The respondent was also given a consent form (Appendix C) whereby he/she agreed to participate in the study. This form included a clause reiterating points a) to g) referred to in the previous paragraph. After the consent form had been signed the interview began.

It was anticipated that a number of respondents would not have a telephone. In these cases Appendix B, "Letter of Explanation of Study", was mailed to the person's home address. Also enclosed was a form, Appendix D, on which the respondent agreed to participate and a stamped self-addressed envelope in which to return the form. This a means of advising the researcher if the person is willing to participate and how he/she may be contacted for an

appointment. It was only after the appointment had been made and the researcher was in the respondent's home that the consent form (Appendix C) was signed. This procedure ensured that the person had ample opportunity to ask any questions and clarify any concerns before agreeing to participate. For those persons who did not respond through Appendix D within two weeks, a follow up letter (Appendix E) was mailed, with Appendix B enclosed, again requesting their participation in the study.

Significance of the Study

While research has been done on other Department of Social Services' clients in Newfoundland and Labrador, such as studies on abuse victims, foster children and young offenders, there has not been any study of social assistance recipients who may be considered to be "socially disadvantaged". Although this study is not concerned with recipients per se, but rather with their perceptions of a social rehabilitation program and the perceived benefits which accrued to them, the demographic information provides data on this group of people that was not previously known.

The study is significant not only by providing demographic data of this population but because certain statements can be made about the relationships between specific characteristics or variables and measurements of self-esteem and life satisfaction.

The study will also explore relationships or

associations between self-esteem/life satisfaction and how participants perceived the program and any resultant benefits. The linking of the concept of self-esteem with client perceptions of the program and its perceived benefits could, therefore, lead to new knowledge in this area.

The study could also be significant from a policy perspective. There has not been an evaluation of the St. John's Work Activity Project and while it is not the purpose of this study to formally evaluate the program, the participants, through their expressed opinions and perceptions, have provided a subjective evaluation. Since clients have not often been invited to give their perceptions of programs, their feedback could be a valuable source of information for the consideration of management in planning the future directions of programs for socially disadvantaged persons.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This is a study of fifty (50) Social Assistance recipients who participated in a work rehabilitation program called the St. John's Work Activity Project. The results of the study will be illustrated by tables which summarize percentages and frequencies of pertinent variables. There will be three sections to this chapter. The first part will be a demographic profile of the participants including their social support system; the second will discuss the results of two scales which measured client esteem and life satisfaction; the third part will give the participants' perceptions of the program. Certain relationships between the results of the scales and client perceptions of the program and/or their demographic characteristics will also be considered.

Demographic Profile

A total of 50 persons participated in the study. The sample was almost evenly divided with 26 females and 24 males. While their ages ranged from 18-54, Table I shows that 62 percent were under 25 years of age. The average age was 26.8 years and the mode was 22.

TABLE 1
Age of Participants by Gender

Age	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
18-24	16	32	15	30	31	62
25-54	8	16	11	22	19	38
Total	24	48	26	52	50	100

Marital Status

Table 2 breaks down the marital status of the sample into two categories. The first category is called "Never Married and Other". "Never Married" is self-explanatory, and "Other" includes those persons who were separated, divorced, or widowed at the time of the study. Of the 41 people in this category, 28 or 56%, were never married. There were more males than females (57 percent as compared with 43 percent) who were never married. The "Other" group, however, was mostly female with 73%.

The second category, "Married and Common Law Union", comprises those persons who were living with a partner of the opposite sex at the time of the study. Seven of the 9 persons in this category were married and the same ratio applies to both males and females.

TABLE 2
Participants Marital Status

Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Never Married and Other	41	82
Married and Common Law Union	9	18
Total	50	100

Highest Grade Attained In School

The educational level of participants will be considered in two categories; those who have not gone beyond Elementary school, grades 4 to 8, and those who have gone to High school.

TABLE 3
Highest Grade Attained at School by Gender

Grade	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
4-8	16	32	14	28	30	60
9-11	8	16	12	24	20	40
Total	24	48	26	52	50	100

Table 3 indicates that 60 percent of the participants completed Elementary school with 30 percent reporting grade

8 level. Of the 40 percent who completed some High school, 18 percent achieved grade nine. Almost half, or 48 percent of the sample had either grade eight or nine education. A comparison of the educational levels of Project participants with the general population indicated that participants had attained considerably less education. While 60 percent of participants attained grades four to eight only 30 percent of the general population had grade eight or less (Statistics Canada 71-529, 1985). Similarly, while 40 percent of Project participants attained some High School 45 percent of the general population had either completed or partially completed High School (Statistics Canada 71-529, 1985). The number of males and females who completed Elementary school were approximately the same (32 percent for males as compared with 28 percent for females). For those with some High school education, however, it was different as 8 percent more females had completed either grade nine, ten, or eleven.

Closely related to the participants' level of education is the age at which they left school. In Newfoundland, children must attend school until they reach their fifteenth birthday. Only five persons left before age fifteen. A cross-tabulation showed that there was no relationship between leaving school prior to the legal age limit and the chronological age of the participants. Except for one person over forty the other four were under age twenty-five.

The results of the study showed that 60 percent stayed in school long enough to have completed grade 11 (i.e. finish high school) but of that group only 4 persons or, 8 percent actually graduated from high school.

Academic Upgrading or Technical Training

After leaving school less than half, or 42 percent, did any further academic upgrading or technical training. Of this number 24 percent were males and 18 percent were females. A cross-tabulation indicated that while there were no real differences between those participants who had some high school and those who had less than grade 9, it did show that of the 4 persons who had completed grade 11, 3 of them went on to do further training at the College of Trades, or the Cabot Institute as it is now known.

Type Of Work Usually Done By Participants

The respondents were asked what kind of work they usually did. Both males and females reported traditional occupations for their sex. Most males, 54 percent, said they usually did labor work while 30 percent of the female respondents reported waitressing as their main kind of work. With the exception of carpentry, which is considered to be a trade, all of the other categories of work were manual in nature requiring very little, if any, training. A considerable number of participants, 24 percent, had no work history. Twice as many females as males, 16 percent as

compared with 8 percent said they had never been gainfully employed. There were no other demographic characteristics, however, to indicate that this group was any different from those persons who had some work history.

Employment At Time Of The Study

At the time of the study only nine (6 females and 3 males) of the fifty participants were employed as shown in Table 4. If The St. John's Work Activity Project were assessed only in terms of the participants being fully employed it would probably not be considered to be very successful. Considering the purpose of the Program, however, the fact that 61% were employed during the past year suggests that, at least for about 2/3 of the participants, it was helpful.

TABLE 4
Employment Characteristics at Time of Study by Gender

Characteristic	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Employment Status						
Employed	3	6	6	12	9	18
Unemployed	21	42	20	40	41	82
Total	24	48	26	52	50	100
Earnings Per Hour						
\$4.00-\$6.00	2	22	4	44	6	66
\$6.01-\$8.00	1	11	2	22	3	34
Total	3	33	6	66	9	100

Out of 9 persons who were employed at the time of the study 6 earned between \$4.00 to \$6.00 per hour and 3 earned between \$6.06 and \$8.00 per hour. In other words, two-thirds of the participants worked for the minimum wage or slightly above it.

Income Source And Monthly Income Amount.

There were 41 participants who were unemployed at the time of the study. With the exception of one person whose source of income was maintenance from a spouse, the other

forty derived their income from two sources, Unemployment Insurance Benefits and Social Assistance. Table 5 provides a breakdown of these income sources.

TABLE 5

Income Characteristics of Unemployed Participants by Gender

Characteristic	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
Income Source				
U.I.B.	17	41	6	15
Social Assistance	4	10	13	32
Total	21	51	19	47
Income Amount Per Month				
Below \$500	15	37	9	22
Above \$500	6	14	11	26
Total	21	51	20	48
Employment During Past 12 Months				
Yes	18	44	7	17
No	13	7	13	32
Total	21	51	20	49
Lowest Hourly Wage For Which Participants Would Work				
\$4.00-\$6.00	18	39	17	41
\$6.01-\$8.00	5	12	3	8
Total	21	51	20	49

The largest source of income for most participants was Unemployment Insurance, and males represented 41 percent of these claimants who drew income from this source. There were three times as many females (32 percent), however, receiving Social Assistance. It seems, therefore, that in the months preceding the study that more men than women worked by almost a margin of three to one, at least long enough to qualify for Unemployment Insurance benefits. This could possibly be attributed to child care problems which women are more likely to encounter than men. Of those participants with children, 62.5% had one or more children. Table 5 also shows that 24 unemployed participants or 59 percent had less than \$500.00 income per month, which is \$400 per month lower than Statistics Canada low income cut offs for urban areas such as St. John's. (Poverty Profile, 1988. National Council of Welfare). Fourteen persons or 33 percent had a monthly income from \$500.00 to \$899.00. Only three persons had income in excess of \$900.00 per month. Within the income range of \$500.00 to \$899.00 there are more females than males. This is probably because the most frequent source of income for women is Social Assistance which is based on family size.

Twenty-five of the unemployed participants, or 61 percent stated that they had worked during the past twelve months. In most cases work for these people was provided through the Department of Social Services Employment

Opportunities Program which employs people for a period long enough to qualify for Unemployment Insurance benefits. Employment is, therefore, cyclical in nature going from Social Assistance to work projects to Unemployment Insurance benefits. All clients of the Department of Social Services who have dependent children and those single people who are considered to be socially disabled could qualify to be hired on an Employment Opportunities Project.

The short term nature of employment is evident in that out of the 25 unemployed participants who worked during the past year, 80 percent were employed from one to twenty weeks.

The lowest wage for which participants would work is indicated in Table 5. Of forty-one unemployed persons, 80 percent stated that they would be willing to work for an hourly wage of \$4.00-\$6.00. This shows that the great majority of the unemployed participants would work for the minimum wage or slightly above it. Considering their lack of skill and limited education these people were realistic in their aspirations about wages from employment.

Living Arrangements

The living arrangements of participants have been dichotomized in Table 6 as independent and dependent. Respondents in the "independent" category would be those who were renting, living in their own homes, or living with non-relatives. The "dependent" category comprised those who

were living with relatives. Fourteen or 78 percent of these respondents were never married and were living with parents. The distinction then between independent and dependent as it relates to living arrangements was whether or not participants lived at home with their parents.

TABLE 6
Living Arrangements by Gender

Category	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Independent	11	22	21	42	32	64
Dependent	13	26	5	10	18	36
Total	24	48	26	52	50	100

As shown in the table there were almost twice as many females as males (42 percent compared with 22 percent) who were considered to be independent in their living arrangements.

Just as most persons who lived at home with parents were never married, it can be expected that those who were living independently would either be married or living with a partner of the opposite sex. Table 7 compares marital status with independent and dependent living arrangements.

Table 7
Marital Status by Status of Living Arrangements

Marital Status	Independent		Dependent		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Never Married	9	20	14	31	23	51
Married or Other Relationship	17	39	4	10	21	49
Total	26	59	28	41	44	100

There were almost twice as many participants living independently who were married or cohabitating with a partner than those who were never married. This is probably consistent with societal expectations that when a person gets married or becomes involved with another person, the desire for independence usually means living apart from relatives.

Contact With Family And Friends During The Past Week

The study showed that participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project had a very high level of contact with both family and friends. Table 8 shows that 98 percent had contact with their families either through visits or telephone calls and 90 percent had contact with friends.

Table 8
Contact with Family and Friends by Gender

Category	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
Contact With Family	23	46	26	52
No Contact With Family	1	2	0	0
Total	24	48	26	52
Contact With Friends	23	46	22	44
No Contact With Friends	1	2	4	8
Total	24	48	26	52

It is noted that the same number of males (23) had contact with both family and friends. All female respondents reported contact with their families. Five of the 50 participants, or 10 percent, said they had no contact with friends. Four of these persons were female and single. Four-fifths of those who had no contact with friends were, therefore, single persons.

The rate of contact between participants and their families and friends was not only very high but it was also quite frequent. Thirty-four percent of the respondents who

were not living with relatives reported daily contact with families and 28 percent reported weekly contact. The fact that the participants lived in the same community as their families could have facilitated the contact but it is quite definite for this group that family ties are very strong.

A slightly lower number of participants (60 percent) reported daily contact with friends, and 38 percent said they were in touch with friends on a weekly basis. Considering the contact that respondents had with family and friends and the frequency with which they kept in touch with each other they appear to have a strong social network from which support can be drawn if needed.

Membership In Social Club, Church, Or Community Group

Although there was a strong social network between participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project and their families and friends, such was not the case in their identification with the community or organized groups. This finding is consistent with that of Lewis (1968) who found that poor people generally tend to isolate themselves from the larger society and do not participate in community activities. In fact, their lack of involvement in church, social, and community groups was almost as pronounced as was their contact or involvement with family and friends. In order to determine participants involvement in the community, apart from family and friends, each person was asked "do you belong to any of the following: social club,

church group, community group". The responses indicated that only 7 participants, 5 of whom were males, belonged to such a club or group. A cross tabulation of those persons who claimed membership in a club or group with educational level did not indicate that these people had more education than those participants who did not belong to community groups or organizations.

Discussion Of Problems With Others

Another question asked of participants to determine their degree of social support was: "If you had a problem is there a person that you would feel comfortable in discussing it with?" Considering the high level of contact with family and friends it would be expected that most respondents would reply in the affirmative. The results showed they did reply as expected with 82 percent saying they did have someone with whom they could discuss a problem. There were slightly more women than men (53 percent as compared with 47 percent) who felt comfortable in talking to someone about a problem. When asked who would they discuss a problem with, the responses were predictable. All but one person said they would discuss a problem with a friend (35 percent) or a family member (63 percent). It is only logical, therefore, that a group of people, such as the participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project, who had such a strong social network with family and friends would confide in these same people if a problem arose.

Participants' Self-Esteem

As a means of measuring self-esteem, participants were asked to respond with "agree" or "disagree" to seven statements which comprise the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (1965). This scale is found on Appendix A, questions 33-39. There are four positive statements and three negative. An indication of high self-esteem would be an "agree" response to a positive statement or a "disagree" response to a negative statement. Likewise, an indication of low self-esteem would be a "disagree" response to a positive statement or an "agree" response to a negative statement. The aggregate of the seven statements for each of the respondents were computed as in Table 9.

TABLE 9
Participant Self-Esteem by Gender

	Male	Female
Self-Esteem Scale (Rosenberg 1965)	F	F
High Self-Esteem	21	22
Low Self-Esteem	3	4
Total	24	26

Forty-three participants or 86 percent scored high on the self-esteem scale. Both males and females scored equally high. A cross-tabulation of low self-esteem and

educational achievement indicated that out of the 7 persons with low self-esteem, 3 had grade 6 and 1 person had grade 4. The highest grade achieved by anyone with low self-esteem was grade 9. There seems to be a positive correlation, therefore, between low grade level and low self-esteem.

Of the 17 participants who were in receipt of Social Assistance, 10 rated themselves high on self-esteem. Three of them were enrolled in an academic upgrading program which was probably a large factor in their rating. The other 7 had small children and while this may have prevented them from working it would not necessarily have affected their self-esteem.

According to Hayes and Nutman (1981) there are certain groups or persons who tend to cope with unemployment more than others and keep their self-esteem intact. Such persons could be single parents as some of the sample were, or young persons who have not had much experience with work. Since 24 percent of the participants had no work history they would probably not experience the negative effects of unemployment to the same degree as those who had a work history and, therefore, the self-esteem of those persons would not be as adversely affected. Likewise, the relatively young age of the group may have been related to the reported high level of self-esteem. Since 62 percent were under the age of 25 their association with the labour

market may not have been long enough to have negatively affected their self-esteem.

Another plausible explanation for the high rating of self-esteem by participants is the strong family ties and support from friends. Contrary to studies documenting the isolation of the unemployed (Jahoda, 1982; Hayes and Nutman, 1981) which negatively affected self-esteem, the participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project did not perceive themselves as being socially isolated. While they were not involved with groups and organizations within the community at large, they did not view themselves as being isolated in the sense of feeling alone and without support. Ninety-eight percent had regular contact with family members and 90 percent had regular contact with friends. Eighty-two percent reported that they had someone with whom they could discuss a problem. This strong social network of support, probably more than any other factor, explains the reporting of such high level of self-esteem.

Participants' Satisfaction With Life

In order to determine the degree of happiness and life satisfaction of participants the Cornell Personal Adjustment Scale (1980) was used. This scale comprise nine questions to which there are three possible responses with the exception of one question which has four possible responses. This scale is found in Appendix A, questions 40-48. Each of the responses can be placed on a continuum

ranging from positive to negative with a score of 4 assigned to the most positive response (this score of 4 applies only to one question) and a score of 1 to the least positive response. For analysis purposes the aggregate of each question was calculated and the overall response was very positive. In order to show how positive the responses to this scale proved to be, one question was used to illustrate and represent the other questions on the scale. The selected question was "on the whole, how satisfied would you say you are with your way of life today?" Table 10 shows that the majority of the respondents indicated they were satisfied with their lives.

The questionnaire gave the respondents a choice of four replies: very satisfied, fairly satisfied, not very satisfied, and very dissatisfied. For convenience purposes, however, the Table has been dichotomized to indicate two categories; satisfied and not satisfied.

Table 10
Participant Life Satisfaction by Gender

	Male	Female	Total
Category	F	F	F
Satisfied	19	19	38
Not Satisfied	5	7	12
Total	24	26	50

The vast majority of participants, 38 or 76 percent gave a positive response indicating satisfaction with their way of life. These positive responses were expressed by an equal number of men and women. The results of the other eight questions on The Cornell Personal Adjustment Scale supported those that were illustrated in table 10.

A cross-tabulation was completed to see if there was any relationship between those who reported they were not satisfied with their lives (12 percent) and the variables of age, education, and marital status, and to determine if they differed in any way from those respondents who reported satisfaction with their lives. The ages varied between 22 and 47 with half of the 12 persons under the age of 30. Within this under 30 group, however, 3 respondents were age 22. It seems, therefore, that the younger participants were more likely to report low life satisfaction than older participants.

In comparing the level of education with the reporting of a lack of life satisfaction by the 12 participants, 8 had grade 8 or less and 4 persons had grade 9 or 10. It cannot be concluded however that people who reported a lack of satisfaction do not have as much education as those who reported satisfaction because 30 percent of the total sample had grade 8 or less education.

As for marital status people with satisfactory lives were found in each category. Of those persons who said they were not satisfied with their lives, however, 7 out of 12 were single.

The same conventional wisdom that applies to the concept of self-esteem may also be expected to apply to happiness and life satisfaction. In other words, it may be a reasonable assumption that most people who are unemployed and experiencing the negative effects of unemployment would not be very satisfied with their lives.

Like the reports of self-esteem, the participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project, as a group, reported a high level (76 percent) of satisfaction with their lives. Unlike the results of self-esteem, though, where almost everyone reported a high level, the degree of satisfaction expressed by participant seemed to be determined by their type of income. Seventy-four percent of those participants whose income was from Unemployment Insurance benefits stated that they were satisfied with their lives whereas only 35

percent of Social Assistance recipients reported a high level of life satisfaction. The fact that most respondents who were in receipt of Social Assistance did not express satisfaction with their lives appears to be consistent, therefore, with the school of thought which says that poor people are usually not very happy or satisfied with their lives.

As for the overall finding that 76 percent of respondents were satisfied with their lives, the reasons that account for persons rating themselves high on self-esteem such as strong family and friendship ties would also apply to the reported high levels of happiness and life-satisfaction keeping in mind , of course, the context of unemployment in Newfoundland.

Perceptions Of The St. John's Work Activity Project And Perceived Benefits

The first eight questions of this final part of the study were concerned with how clients learned about the St. John's Work Activity Project, their discussions with their Social Worker about it, and their orientation period at the Project.

Forty-three of the participants said they learned about the Project from their worker. This is not surprising as it is the workers' responsibility to discuss work and training opportunities with clients, where applicable. Six persons learned about it from a friend, and one heard about the

Project from a relative who had previously attended the program.

All of the fifty participants said that their worker talked with them about the possibility of them attending the Project. The St. John's Work Activity Project was a voluntary program and recipients were not coerced into attending against their wishes. Forty-eight reported that they were given enough information to make a decision about attending and that the program was adequately explained to them.

Although almost all participants stated they had enough information about the Project and that the program was adequately explained to them, not all were given an opportunity to visit the Project prior to formally starting the program. While 33 persons were given an opportunity to visit, 17 reported they did not have an opportunity to see the Project prior to starting. There seemed to be some inconsistency by staff members in arranging visits for clients to see the Project before they made their final decision.

During the orientation period at the St. John's Work Activity Project the participants felt welcome and found the staff to be helpful. Forty-three persons said they felt "very welcome" on their first day and the other 7 clients said they felt "welcome". In terms of being helpful, 40 participants felt that the staff was "very helpful" or

helpful".

Amount Learned From Program Components

The St. John's Work Activity Project comprised several parts or areas such as life skills/academic; two shops, carpentry and upholstery; job search; and guest speakers from outside agencies or organizations. Female participants used to be involved in the "shops" during an earlier time in the life of the project but during the period of this study they were assigned to community agencies when the men were in the "shops". Participants were asked to respond to the amount of learning derived from each of these parts and the results are shown in Table 11.

TABLE 11

Program Component by Extent of Participant's Learning

Category	A Great Deal		Some		Not Much	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Life Skills/ Academic	33	66	15	30	2	4
Shop/Carpentry	7	47	5	33	3	20
Shop/Upholstery	8	89	1	11	0	0
Job Search	30	60	16	32	4	8
Outside Guest	33	66	17	34	0	0

The responses were quite positive for the program

components where all recipients participated such as "life skills", "job search", and "outside guest". An average of 64 percent said they learned a great deal from these components. If the five components were considered, an average of 66 percent reported a great deal of learning from the program.

Seven participants said they did not learn much from at least one program component and two of these participants reported they did not learn much from two components. Since these people represented 14 percent of the sample certain variables (age, education, and marital status) were checked against each other to see if these respondents differed in any other significant way from the others who had reported learning "some" or "a great deal" from the program. There was no indication from looking at the variables of sex and education to suggest that the respondents who said they didn't learn much differed any from those who learned "some" or "a great deal". Ages and education levels were distributed fairly evenly along respective continuum. The marital status of those participants who said they did not learn much, however, was not distributed evenly as 8 out of the 9 respondents were single. This finding was similar to the marital status of participants who reported low self-esteem.

Relationship With Staff And Client Perception Of Staff Skill

There were only 3 participants who indicated they did not get along so well with any member of the staff of the St. John's Work Activity Project. One of these respondents was referring to the upholstery instructor and the other two were referring to the social worker. The remaining 47 participants stated that they got along "very well" or "well" with the staff.

As for how skilled the respondents perceived the staff to be in performing their duties, nobody said that staff were not skilled, and there were only 3 persons who did not rate staff as "very skilled" or "skilled."

Problems Or Difficulties In Attending The Project

One of the concerns that governments or sponsoring agencies usually have with employment and training programs is the difficulties that may preclude people from attending or what ongoing problems they may encounter. Participants were asked the degree of difficulty they experienced in three areas: Transportation, Day Care, and the Work Activity Allowance. A choice of three answers were given the respondents but the responses were dichotomized into two categories as shown in Table 12.

TABLE 12

Perception of Difficulty by Problem Areas in the St. John's
Work Activity Project

Category	Transportation		Day Care		Work Activity/ Allowance	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
Quite Difficult/ Somewhat Difficult	23	46	4	17	27	54
Not Difficult	27	54	19	83	23	46
Total	50	100	23	100	50	100

Transportation was "not difficult" for 54 percent of the participants. It was "somewhat difficult" for 32 percent, and it proved to be "quite difficult" for 14 percent.

Day Care did not apply to 27 participants. Of the 23 who did respond 83 percent replied that it was "not difficult". Only 4 persons stated that daycare was "somewhat difficult" or "quite difficult". This lack of difficulty with child care was probably related to the strong family ties which could enable the participant to have the grandmother or some other relative care for the child. Of the three problem areas identified, the Work Activity Allowance caused the most difficulty for participants. Although 46 percent said it presented no

difficulty for them, 54 percent said it was either "somewhat difficult" or "quite difficult". An incentive payment of \$175.00 per month is not very much considering the expenses such as transportation, clothing, and lunches, that people need in order to attend any work or training program. The Department of Social Services should be aware of this difficulty for clients in planning future projects similar to the St. John's Work Activity Project.

Post-Program Contact By Staff

In many cases there was little or no contact by the agency with participants after they finished the program. Less than half, 42 percent or 21 persons reported that they had been contacted by some staff person from the St. John's Work Activity after they had finished the Program and 58 percent or 29 respondents said they had not been contacted. These results indicate that while the Project did a fair amount of post program contact, it did not seem to be consistently applied.

The participants who responded affirmatively when asked if they had been contacted by the Project after completing the program were also asked the reason why they were contacted. The most frequent reason for contact was "follow up", to see how clients were getting along, to see if they had found a job, or to see if the project staff could be of help in some way. This reason accounted for 62 percent of the contacts. Another 29 percent said they were contacted

by the Project to "offer a job". Although most of the clients had not found work they did appreciate someone from the Project keeping in touch with them after they had finished the Program.

Participant Expectations

Participants were asked what they expected to get out of the St. John's Work Activity Project when they started the program. Table 13 shows the most common responses.

TABLE 13
Participant Expectations of Project by Gender

Category	Male		Female		Total	
	F	%	F	%	F	%
To Learn How To Get A Job	7	14	5	10	12	24
To Get A Job	4	8	6	12	10	20
To Learn New Skills	5	10	2	4	7	14
To Get Work Experience and Training	3	6	1	2	4	8
Other (Uncategorizable responses)	5	10	12	24	17	34
Total	24	48	26	52	50	100

The expectation that most people had when they started the Project was "to learn how to get a job". This indicates that these participants were realistic in realizing that they were not job ready at that time and that

they needed certain job search techniques before employment was possible. Twenty-four percent were in this category. Twenty percent had different expectations in that they felt they were job ready and, therefore, expected the Project "to get a job" for them. Fourteen percent expected "to learn new skills", and 8 percent stated they wanted "to get work experience and training". The remaining 34 percent gave a variety of expectations which included "to learn lifeskills", "to gain confidence", "to meet people", and "to get a job from Social Services".

When asked if they felt they received what they expected from the Project 84 percent or 42 participants responded affirmatively. Of the 8 persons who stated they did not receive what they expected, all 8 were under age twenty-eight; 6 were males; 2 were females; and 5 had grade 8 or less.

Recommendation Of Program To Others

One criterion of any program's success could be whether or not it was recommended to others by those who had experienced it. If this is the case The St. John's Work Activity, based on this criterion, could be considered to have been quite successful. Only 1 person would not recommend the program to a friend who was in need of job training or help in preparing for a job. Forty-eight percent said they would definitely recommend the Program to a friend and 50 percent said they thought they would

recommend it. A total of 98 percent of the participants, therefore, would either recommend or highly recommend the program to a friend.

Amount Of Satisfaction With Job Training Or Job Preparation

Respondents were quite satisfied with the amount of job training or job preparation that they received at the St. John's Work Activity Project. Only 1 person said that he was "indifferent or mildly dissatisfied" with the amount of job training or job preparation. The other 49 felt they were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with this aspect of the Project. This is totally consistent with the number of participants who would recommend the Program to others.

Overall Satisfaction With The St. John's Work Activity Project

In responding to a question concerning their overall level or degree of satisfaction with the Program, most participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction as shown in Table 14.

TABLE 14
Participant Satisfaction with Project by Gender

Category	Male		Female	
	F	%	F	%
Very Satisfied	16	32	20	40
Mostly Satisfied	8	16	6	12
Total	24	48	26	52

Almost three-quarters of the sample, 72 percent, reported they were "very satisfied" with the Program and the remaining 28 percent said they were "mostly satisfied" with it. The overall perception by participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project was, therefore, very positive.

Suggestions For Improvement

Although the overall perception of the St. John's Work Activity was very positive, 56 percent or 28 participants did make suggestions for improvement. While no one suggestion was offered by more than 4 recipients there were a number of ways suggested as to how the program could be improved. Some of them are as follows: provide more variety to the program. Some people felt that there should be more than carpentry and upholstery in the "shop" components as these did not appeal to female participants. Some participants felt that the program should last longer

so that they would be even more equipped to look for and find employment. Others felt that the outside speakers and guest were very helpful and they would like to see more resource people from community groups and other government agencies.

Although there were other suggestions these were the most frequently cited by the participants and they should be considered in the planning of future programs.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This is a study of 50 Social Assistance recipients who attended a training and employment program called the St. John's Work Activity Project. The objective of this Program was to improve the employment prospects for unemployed persons by teaching life skills and providing practical work experience through sheltered workshops. The purpose of the study was to obtain the perceptions of clients about their experiences while at the Project and to ascertain the perceived benefits of the Program.

The random sample of 50 persons was selected from a population of 150 Social Assistance recipients who had attended the St. John's Work Activity Project over the three year period 1984-1987. The sample comprised 26 females and 24 males. The ages ranged from 18 to 54 with the average age being 26.8 and the mode being 22. Academically, the highest grade attained in school varied from grade 4 to grade 11 but 48 percent of the sample had either grade 8 or 9. All categories of marital status were represented in the sample, however, more than half of the respondents (56 percent) were never married.

While most participants (82 percent) were not employed at the time of the study it should not be concluded that this finding validates the myth that welfare recipients

prefer dependency to work (Cull and Hardy, 1973). If the income source of the respondents is considered it will be noted that 56.1 percent of those unemployed were in receipt of Unemployment Insurance benefits which means that they were employed at some time during the past year to qualify for these benefits. The findings indicate that 61 percent of the unemployed participants were in this group. One cannot conclude, therefore, that these respondents are chronically unemployed and do not want to work.

Although most of the participants were not dependent on social assistance at the time of the study it is acknowledged that 82 percent were not engaged in gainful employment. Even though there may be a perception that there are enough jobs available for those who want to work, the unemployment rate in this province refutes this myth. This is consistent with Schiller (1973) who says that there is a gap between public expectations and labour market realities.

The results of the study indicate that 6 of the 9 employed persons were females. This finding both supports and refutes that of Gueron (1980) who found, while reviewing the Supported-Work Experiment in the United States, that female recipients of public assistance worked more frequently than did male recipients. Westat (1979) also found that women generally experienced greater post-program earnings than did men. This study supports the findings of

these writers in that, at the time of the study, more females were working. If, however, the twelve months prior to the study is considered, the findings disagree since 18 of the 25 persons who were employed during this time were males.

Although this finding that males are employed more frequently than females disagrees with the literature (Gueron, 1980) the differences merit examination. The purpose of the Gueron study was to evaluate a program in a large urban environment where success was primarily measured by post-program employment. The purpose of this study, however, was not program evaluation but client perceptions of a training program operating in a climate of very high unemployment. Whether males experience longer periods of employment than females as a result of training programs in Newfoundland is a valid question and one which should probably be addressed in another study.

In order to obtain a more complete profile of the participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project the study determined their level of self-esteem and life satisfaction in addition to demographic data. Comparison of selected demographic variables with participant's perception of the Program and the concepts of self-esteem and life satisfaction verified certain information about this group of people. For example, most of the people with low self-esteem had an educational level of grade 6 or less and those

whose expectations of the program were not met were single.

While poor people or those who may be considered as disadvantaged should not be viewed as homogeneous (Somers, 1968), this particular group does share certain characteristics and they do hold a common "view of the world" in many respects. For example, in response to the statement "almost everything these days is a racket", 35 respondents or 70 percent replied that they either agreed or were undecided. This would support the trait list outlined by Valentine (1968) when he attributed feelings of suspicion and apathy to poor people in their views of society.

In spite of the fact that several participants were unemployed for a long period of time and others had no work history, the majority (76 percent) were happy and satisfied with their lives. They also felt very good about themselves as 86 percent scored "high" on the self-esteem scale.

A discrepancy does exist between this finding and some findings in the literature which indicates that the unemployed do not feel good about themselves and are not satisfied with their lives (Feather and Barber, 1983). While these negative effects are well documented (Jahoda, 1982; Watts, 1983) it should be noted that many of the studies which produced these findings were conducted in large, industrialized cities in North America.

The findings on the effects of unemployment in urban industrial parts of North America or Britain do not

necessarily hold true for Newfoundland. For example, despite an unemployment rate approximately twice the national average, the Economic Council of Canada (1980:XI) noted "that in comparison to the more privileged provinces- Alberta, British Columbia, and Ontario- this province has a lower incidence of suicide, homicide, divorce, mental illness, and mortality due to cirrhosis of the liver". Hill (1983:194), in a study conducted for the Community Services Council found that "unemployment does not have a serious impact on the social self-image of the unemployed".

The seasonal nature of work and the relatively few opportunities for employment also make Newfoundland distinct in some respects when compared with other parts of Canada and the United States. Hill (1983) found that 69.5 percent of seasonal workers worked an average of 5.2 months per year. In the absence of long term employment the objective is to secure work to qualify for Unemployment Insurance benefits. In a province such as Newfoundland and Labrador where so few jobs are available people receiving Unemployment Insurance are not stigmatized by their fellow citizens. In response to a question by Hill (1983) as to whether or not there was any shame in receiving Unemployment Insurance benefits 80.6 percent replied negatively.

Considering the fact that Unemployment Insurance benefits are socially acceptable and those who work long enough to qualify are not stigmatized by the community at

large, the high self-esteem ratings seen in this study are not too suprising. As stated earlier, 61 percent of the participants had worked during the past year and of the 41 unemployed at the time of the study, 23 or 56 percent, were in receipt of Unemployment Insurance benefits. Although they were unemployed, they had worked during the past year and had a secure and acceptable income for the present with a good possibility of future work on some government sponsored project if employment could not be obtained in the private sector. Previous employment, or one's work history is related to self-esteem in that it helps to establish one's social status. (Hill, 1983:176) says that "social evaluation of these unemployed workers rests on the nature and quality of the work they do, both while officially employed and unemployed, rather than their labour force status at any one point in time".

Although the findings of the psychological well-being of the participants differed somewhat from those generally reported in the literature (Watts, 1983; Lewis, 1971), they are supported by studies of the unemployed in Newfoundland and Labrador. The historic and seasonal nature of work, the absence of a strong market economy, the meaning of work, and the very strong family and friendship support networks all contribute to the positive psychological well-being of many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians even when they are unemployed and in receipt of social assistance.

Although there is documentation (Hill, 1983) for the happiness and well-being of people in this province, the question as to whether or not it will continue or how long it will continue is quite relevant. A couple of recent events do not give much encouragement that the economy of the province will soon improve. For example, the reduction in quotas of northern cod and the delay of the development of Hibernia were great disappointments that will not help to raise the hopes of people who have been waiting for such a long time for employment. The recent changes to the Unemployment Insurance Program also have serious implications for Newfoundland and Labrador and could certainly impact on the self-esteem of people who may be affected.

The psychological well-being of unemployed persons in this province, while not the primary focus of this study, is deemed to be of sufficient importance to warrant further research and should probably be the subject of a future study.

The participants of the St. John's Work Activity Project were not only happy and satisfied with their lives and rated themselves high on self-esteem but most reported a positive experience of the Project in terms of what they learned from it, how well they got along with the staff, and their overall satisfaction with the Program. Sixty-six percent of the respondents said they learned a great deal

from the program, 94 percent said they got along well with the staff and all participants reported they were either very satisfied or mostly satisfied with the Program.

One of the interesting findings of the study was the strong social network that existed between participants and their families and friends. Almost all respondents (98 percent) reported weekly contact with members of their families and 90 percent said they had weekly contact with friends. This high rate and frequency of contact is considered to be a contributing factor to the positive results of psychological well-being of participants. The converse holds true, however, for contacts with the community at large. Eighty-six percent of the participants did not belong to a social club, church group, or community organization. This could mean that these persons are socially isolated from the mainstream of society and probably do not perceive themselves to be members of the larger community in which they live. This finding is consistent with that of Lewis (1968) and Hill (1983) who found that one of the general characteristics of poor people is that they isolate themselves from the larger society and they do not participate in community activities.

Since the results of the study were overwhelmingly positive in terms of the respondents' perceptions of the St. John's Work Activity Project and their psychological well-being, attention was given to those relatively few

individuals who differed from the majority of the respondents in their assessment of the program and their reported levels of happiness, self-esteem, and life satisfaction.

A cross-tabulation of marital status with the concept of life satisfaction indicated that 7 out of the 12 persons who said they were not satisfied with their lives were single. An examination of the data to determine any relationship between marital status and those persons who said they did not learn much from the Program revealed that 8 out of the 9 were single. The 3 individuals who stated that they did not get along well with Project staff were also single. In responding to a question concerning program expectations being met, 6 of the 8 respondents who said their expectations were not met were single. It was also found that 6 of the 8 participants who reported no contact with friends were single.

The results show, therefore, that a majority of participants who were not satisfied with their lives, who did not learn much from the Project or get along well with the staff, who felt that their expectations of the Program were not met, and who had no contact with friends were single persons.

In considering the development of future employment or training programs for Social Assistance recipients, the results of this study suggest that maybe this particular

type of program may not be the most appropriate for single persons. It may be prudent to have single recipients complete a needs assessment in order to determine what their specific needs may be in the areas of employment and training.

If Social Assistance recipients are to secure and maintain employment they must increase their education for employment is facilitated by more education (Nichols, 1979). Hudgins (1986) suggests that if welfare recipients are to benefit from economic growth (as this province is expected to do with the development of the Hibernia oil and gas project) there must be an investment in education and training. In light of the fact that only 4 participants in this study completed grade eleven, consideration should be given in the development of any new training program to the inclusion of an academic component.

The success of many employment and training programs is often determined by whether or not work is found and retained for a period of time after completion. While this is probably the most measurable criterion of success it is not the only determinant and it would certainly not apply to the St. John's Work Activity Project where only 9 participants were employed at the time of the study. Somers (1968: 113) says " there is some evidence that even if an immediate job is not provided many of these hard core unemployed workers have benefitted in changed attitudes and

outlook." Worrall (1978: 295) in discussing a rehabilitation program says "the contributions of the program to the psychic well-being of the client, his family, and others may be quite large." The results of this study vis-a-vis expectations met and overall satisfaction as reported by the participants justify these statements and confirm that the St. John's Work Activity has been an overall success at least from the client's perception.

Limitations of the Study

The findings of this study can only apply to the participants of the St. John's Activity Project and cannot be generalized to groups or individuals who have participated in other training or employment programs. Forty-three of the 50 subjects who participated in this study were from St. John's and 7 were from Bell Island which is considered to be a semi-urban area. In order to determine if the findings are valid for Social Assistance recipients who have attended other programs similar in nature to the St. John's Work Activity Project it is suggested that this study be replicated with subjects who live in rural areas of the province.

Recommendations

The overall results of this study would seem to warrant a number of recommendations for the future planning of training programs for social assistance clients who may be

considered to be socially disadvantaged.

Almost three-quarters of the sample, or 72 percent reported that they were "very satisfied" with the St. John's Work Activity Project. Considering that such a large number of participants rated the program so highly it is recommended that similar programs be developed in other parts of the province as well as St. John's. While client perception of satisfaction is important this recommendation would depend upon the results of a formal evaluation of the St. John's Work Activity Project which found that the objectives of the Project were achieved.

The findings indicated that single persons were the least satisfied with the program. While all participants had some discussion with their worker about attending the program, 34 percent (most of whom were single) said they did not have an opportunity to visit the Project. It is recommended that all potential participants be involved in decisions which affect them prior to entering the program. If single persons had been more involved initially it may have been determined that this program was not the most appropriate one to meet their needs.

The results of the study showed that only 40 percent of the participants had completed some high school and almost half of these, or 18 percent, achieved only grade IX education. Since the basic requirements of any job these days is completion of high school it is, therefore,

recommended that an academic upgrading component be part of any new training programs.

Another educational need of many Social Assistance recipients who attend training programs, apart from academic upgrading, is assertiveness training. It is recommended that any Life Skills component include assertiveness training with a view to helping participants feel more comfortable with other individuals and groups in the community. The result of this training would hopefully be a feeling of less isolation from the mainstream of society and more involvement in the community.

One of the suggestions by the respondents for improvement to the Program was to have more "shop" components other than carpentry and upholstery which generally did not appeal to female participants. It is recommended that this suggestion receive future consideration.

Several participants felt that the Program was not long enough. It is recommended, therefore, that consideration be given to extending any future programs beyond 12 weeks.

It was also suggested by the respondents that the incentive allowance be increased. The St. John's Work Activity Project did not adequately address expenses such as transportation, clothes, and lunches, that people incur when they attend such programs. If Social Assistance recipients are to participate in training programs, it is essential

that they be provided with adequate financial resources to overcome the barriers which prevent them from attending and completing such programs. It is strongly recommended, therefore, that the incentive allowance of \$175.00 per month be increased.

It has been found that training which provides people with a real-world experience is very helpful in securing employment after the program has finished (Hudgins, 1986). Program staff have met with some success in finding work for participants with local employers. It is recommended that greater efforts be made to have participants of programs, such as the St. John's Work Activity Project, placed with private employers for an apprenticeship period on a cost-sharing basis.

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APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIREA. DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

First , I am going to ask you a few questions about yourself.

1. What is your age? _____
2. What is your marital status?
 - 1) Single _____
 - 2) Married _____
 - 3) Separated _____
 - 4) Divorced _____
 - 5) Common law union _____
 - 6) Widowed _____
3. If you have children, could you please tell me how many you have? _____
4. How old were you when you left school? _____
5. What is the highest grade that you completed in school?

6. After leaving school, did you participate in any academic upgrading or technical training such as:
 - 1) Night School _____
 - 2) Summer School _____
 - 3) GED Program _____
 - 4) Career Academy _____
 - 5) Compu-College _____

B. Work History and Employment Status

Now I am going to ask you some questions about your work history.

7. What kind of work do you usually do? _____
8. Are you working now?
 - 1) Yes _____ - answer questions 9 to 13
 - 2) No _____ - answer questions 14 to 20
9. How long have you been working at this job? _____
10. Could you please tell me how much you earn per hour?
 - 1) \$4.00 - \$6.00 _____
 - 2) \$6.01 - \$8.00 _____
 - 3) \$8.01 - \$10.00 _____
 - 4) More than \$10.00 _____
11. Do you feel that your job pays enough to support you?
 - 1) Yes _____
 - 2) No _____
12. How satisfied are you with your current job?
 - 1) Very satisfied _____
 - 2) Somewhat satisfied _____
 - 3) Somewhat dissatisfied _____
 - 4) Very dissatisfied _____
13. If the kind of job you are now doing isn't your first choice, what kind of work would you really like to do?

14. What is your major source of income?
- 1) Unemployment Insurance Benefits _____
 - 2) Worker's Compensation _____
 - 3) Canada Pension Plan _____
 - 4) Personal Savings _____
 - 5) Social Assistance _____
 - 6) Other (please specify) _____
15. Could you please tell me the approximate amount of your monthly income? _____
16. Have you worked during the past 12 months?
- 1) Yes _____
 - 2) No _____
17. If yes, how many weeks? _____
18. If you had an opportunity for a job, what is the lowest amount of money that you would work for? _____
19. Have you looked for work within the past month?
- 1) Yes _____
 - 2) No _____ (CONTINUE TO QUESTION 20)
- If yes, how often have you looked during this time?
- _____
20. If no, what is the main reason why you did not look for work? _____

C. LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

I would like to ask you a few questions about your living arrangements.

21. What was your living arrangement when you attended the

St. John's Work Activity Project?

- 1) Living in own home _____
- 2) Renting _____
- 3) Living with Relatives _____
- 4) Living with Non-Relatives _____

22. What is your current living arrangement? _____

23. If you have changed your address during the past two years, approximately how many times have you moved? _____

24. I am going to read a list of reasons why some people move. Could you please tell me the reasons why you found it necessary to move the last time?

- 1) Accommodation was too expensive _____
- 2) Place was too small _____
- 3) Place was too large _____
- 4) Place was too difficult to heat _____
- 5) Place was in poor physical condition _____
- 6) Had to share washroom or kitchen facilities with others _____
- 7) Could not get cooperation from landlord in making repairs _____
- 8) Could not get along with neighbors _____
- 9) Did not like the location _____
- 10) Lack of transportation services _____
- 11) Other reason (Please specify) _____

25. How satisfied are you with your present housing?

- 1) Very satisfied _____
- 2) Somewhat satisfied _____
- 3) Somewhat dissatisfied _____
- 4) Very dissatisfied _____

D. SOCIAL SUPPORT SYSTEM

I would now like to ask you some questions about your family, friends and social activities.

26. Do you have contact through visits and telephone calls with members of your family (parents, brothers/sisters, grandparents)?

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____

- 26a. If yes, how often do you have contact?

- 1) Daily _____
- 2) Weekly _____
- 3) Monthly _____

27. Now, how about friends other than relatives. Do you have contact with them?

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____

- 27a. If yes, how often do you have contact with them?

- 1) Daily _____
- 2) Weekly _____
- 3) Monthly _____

28. Do you belong to any of the following:

	YES	NO
1) Social Club	_____	_____
2) Church Group	_____	_____
3) Community Group	_____	_____

29. The following is a list of things people do for recreation. Please indicate if you did any of them in the past week.

	YES	NO
1) Read a newspaper	_____	_____
2) Participated in a game or sport	_____	_____
3) Go to watch a game or sport	_____	_____
4) Go to bingo	_____	_____
5) Go to the movies	_____	_____
6) Eat out at a restaurant	_____	_____
7) Go to a night club	_____	_____

30. Sometimes when people have problems or things that are bothering them, they like to talk it over with someone.

If you had a problem is there anyone that you would feel comfortable in discussing it with?

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____

31. If yes, who would this person or persons be?

- 1) Husband/Wife _____
- 2) parents _____
- 3) Brother/Sister _____
- 4) Other relative (please specify) _____

- | | |
|---------------------------|-------|
| 5) Friend | _____ |
| 6) Clergyman | _____ |
| 7) Social Worker | _____ |
| 8) Other (please specify) | _____ |

E. SELF-ESTEEM AND LIFE SATISFACTION

I will now read to you some statements about how some people feel about themselves. I would like you to indicate if you agree or disagree with the statements.

AGREE DISAGREE

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| 32. I feel that I am a person of worth,
at least on an equal plane with others | 1 | 2 |
| 33. I feel that I have a number of good
qualities | 1 | 2 |
| 34. All in all, I am inclined to feel that
I am a failure | 1 | 2 |
| 35. I am able to do things as well as most
other people | 1 | 2 |
| 36. I feel that I do not have much to be
proud of | 1 | 2 |
| 37. I take a positive attitude towards
myself | 1 | 2 |
| 38. At times I think I am no good at all | 1 | 2 |

Now I will ask you a few questions about how you see your life.

39. All in all, how much happiness would you say you find

in life today?

- 1) Almost none _____
- 2) Some, but not very much _____
- 3) A good deal _____

40. In general, how would you say feel most of the time, in good or low spirits.

- 1) I am usually in good spirits _____
- 2) I am in good spirits some of the time and
in low spirits some of the time _____
- 3) I am usually in low spirits _____

41. On the whole, how satisfied would you say you are with your way of life today?

- 1) Very satisfied _____
- 2) Fairly satisfied _____
- 3) Not very satisfied _____
- 4) Not very satisfied at all _____

42. How often do you get the feeling that your life today is not very useful?

- 1) Often _____
- 2) Sometimes _____
- 3) Hardly ever _____

43. How often do you find yourself feeling "blue"?

- 1) Often _____
- 2) Sometimes _____
- 3) Hardly ever _____

44. How often do you get upset by the things that happen in your day-to-day living?

- 1) Often _____
- 2) Sometimes _____
- 3) Hardly ever _____

45. These days I find myself giving up hope of trying to improve myself.

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____
- 3) Undecided _____

46. Almost everything these days is a racket.

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____
- 3) Undecided _____

47. How much do you plan ahead the things that you will be doing next week or the week after?

- 1) I make many plans _____
- 2) I make few plans _____
- 3) I make almost no plans _____

F. PERCEPTION OF THE ST. JOHN'S WORK ACTIVITY PROJECT AND PERCEIVED BENEFITS

In this final section I would like to ask you some questions about the St. John's Work Activity Project as you saw it and whether you derived any benefits from this program.

48. How did you learn about the Project?

- 1) Worker _____
- 2) Friend _____
- 3) Relative _____

49. Did you and your worker talk about the possibility of your attending the Project?

- 1) Yes _____ (CONTINUE TO QUESTION 49a)
- 2) No _____

49a. Did you feel that you had enough information to make a decision?

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____

50. Did you feel that the program was adequately explained to you?

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____

51. Were you given an opportunity to visit the St. John's Work Activity Project before starting the program?

- 1) Yes _____
- 2) No _____

52. On the first day at the Project how did you feel?

- 1) Very welcome _____
- 2) Somewhat welcome _____
- 3) Not very welcome _____

53. On the first day at the Project did you feel the staff was helpful to you?

1) Yes _____

2) No _____

53a. If yes how helpful was

	<u>VERY HELPFUL</u>	<u>HELPFUL</u>	<u>NOT VERY HELPFUL</u>
Lifeskills Instruction	1	2	3
Academic Teacher	1	2	3
Shop Instructor	1	2	3
Social Worker	1	2	3

54. The program was made up of different parts and covered several areas of interests. How much did you learn from each part?

	<u>A GREAT DEAL</u>	<u>SOME</u>	<u>NOT MUCH</u>
Life Skills/Academic	1	2	3
Shop (Carpentry)	1	2	3
Shop (Upholstery)	1	2	3
Job Search	1	2	3
Outside Guest	1	2	3

55. How did you get along with the staff?

	VERY WELL	WELL	NOT SO WELL	NOT AT ALL
Life Skills Instructor	1	2	3	4
Shop Instructor (Carpentry)	1	2	3	4
Shop Instructor (Upholstery)	1	2	3	4
Project Director	1	2	3	4
Job Placement Officer	1	2	3	4

56. How skilled did you consider the staff to be in performing their duties?

	VERY SKILLED	SKILLED	SOMEWHAT SKILLED	NOT SKILLED
Life Skills Instructor	1	2	3	4
Shop Instructor (Carpentry)	1	2	3	4
Shop Instructor (upholstery)	1	2	3	4
Social Worker	1	2	3	4
Job Placement Officer	1	2	3	4

57. Did you have any difficulty in getting along with the other participants?

1) Yes _____

2) No _____

57a. If yes, would you say that these difficulties were:

1) Serious _____

2) Not Serious _____

58. If you had a problem with any of the following, please indicate how difficult it was for you.

	<u>QUITE DIFFICULT</u>	<u>SOMEWHAT DIFFICULT</u>	<u>NOT DIFFICULT</u>
Transportation	1	2	3
Day Care	1	2	3
Work Activity Allowance	1	2	3

59. Did anyone from the Project contact you after you finished the program?

- 1) Yes _____
2) No _____

- 59a. If yes, what was their reason for contacting you?

60. Did you contact the Project, either through a phone call or visit, after you finished the program?

- 1) Yes _____
2) NO _____

- 60a. If yes, why? _____

61. What did you expect to get out of the St. John's Work Activity Project? _____

62. Do you feel that you received what you expected from the Project?

- 1) Yes _____
2) No _____

- 62a. If no, in what way or ways were you disappointed? _____

63. If a friend were in need of job training or help in preparing for a job, would you recommend this program to him/her?
- 1) No, definitely not _____
 - 2) No, I don't think so _____
 - 3) Yes, I think so _____
 - 4) Yes, definitely _____
64. How satisfied were you with the amount of job training or job preparation that you received?
- 1) Quite dissatisfied _____
 - 2) Indifferent or mildly dissatisfied _____
 - 3) Mostly satisfied _____
 - 4) Very satisfied _____
65. Have the services you received helped you to deal more effectively with looking for or finding a job?
- 1) Yes, they helped a great deal _____
 - 2) Yes, they helped somewhat _____
 - 3) No, they really didn't help _____
 - 4) No, they seemed to make things worse _____
66. On an overall, general sense, how satisfied were you with the program?
- 1) Very satisfied _____
 - 2) Mostly satisfied _____
 - 3) Indifferent or mildly dissatisfied _____
 - 4) Quite dissatisfied _____

67. After having gone through the program at the St. John's Work Activity Project I'm wondering if you have any suggestions as to how the program might be improved?

This is the end of the questionnaire. Thank you very much for your co-operation.

APPENDIX B
LETTER OF EXPLANATION OF STUDY

42 Glenview Terrace
St. John's, NF
A1E 3H7

Dear _____:

I'm working on my master's degree at the School of Social Work, Memorial University, and I'm doing a study of people who were in the St. John's Work Activity Project. The purpose of the study is to find out what people thought of the Work Activity Project and if it was helpful to them.

I got your name from a list of people who participated in the Work Activity Project and I'm writing you to ask if we could get together at your convenience to talk about your views on the project and to find out whether you thought it was any good to you. If we could work out a time to get together I'd be happy to tell you more about the research project.

If after hearing more about the study you agree to take part in it, I can assure you this will not affect in any way your involvement with the Department of Social Services. I will not be looking at any files or information the Department has about you. Any information you give will be held in strict confidence. If you agree to participate in the study but later on change your mind you can withdraw at any time.

Naturally, I'm hopeful that you will participate. In turn, I'd be happy to send you a copy of the study after I'm finished it if you wish.

I'm enclosing a form for you to read, sign and return to me if you agree to take part in the study. When I get the form back, I'll phone you to make an appointment. If you want to ask me any questions about this feel free to call me at either my work number 576-5815 in the day time, or my home number 579-1272 on evenings and weekends after six.

I really appreciate your cooperation in participating in this study. I look forward to hearing from you and do call if you have any concerns.

Yours truly,

(encl).

Roy E. Barbour

APPENDIX C
CLIENT CONSENT FORM

Mr. Roy E. Barbour
42 Glenview Terrace
St. John's, NF
A1E 3H7

TELEPHONE: 576-5815 (work)
579-1272 (home)

I, _____, understand that the purpose of your study is to obtain the views of participants in the St. John's Work Activity Project and also to determine any benefits that they may have derived from the program.

I understand that the results of this study could be helpful to the Department of Social Services in planning other work and training programs for social assistance recipients.

I understand that my part in this study will be to give my opinions about the St. John's Work Activity Project by answering questions about the program. I will also provide some information about my personal circumstances and activities.

I understand that this study is being completed under the supervision of Dr. J.V. Thompson of the School of Social Work at the Memorial University, that I have the right to withdraw from this study at any time, and that any information that I provide will be kept confidential and that my name will not appear in any part of the study.

PARTICIPANT

DATE

APPENDIX D
AGREEMENT TO PARTICIPATE IN STUDY

I, _____, agree to participate in a study being done by Roy E. Barbour on client perception and perceived benefits of the St. John's Work Activity Project.

The telephone number where you can reach me is _____.

APPENDIX E
FOLLOW UP LETTER

42 Glenview Terrace
St. John's, NF
A1E 3H7

Dear _____:

You may recall recently receiving a letter from me requesting your participation in a study that I am doing under the supervision of the School of Social Work at Memorial University. The study is concerned with the views of clients about the St. John's Work Activity Project and the perceived benefits from their participation in that program.

I have not yet received your reply and in case you have not received my first letter I am enclosing another for your attention with a stamped, self-addressed envelope. If you agree to take part in my study, I would really appreciate hearing from you as soon as possible.

Thank you for your anticipated help and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours truly,

Roy E. Barbour

(encl.)



