An investigation of the aspirations and expectations of mildly intellectually disabled adolescents for adult independence

Deslea Maxine Konza
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UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

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AN INVESTIGATION OF THE ASPIRATIONS AND EXPECTATIONS OF MILDLY INTELLIGENTLY DISABLED ADOLESCENTS FOR ADULT INDEPENDENCE

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree

MASTER of EDUCATION (HONS)

from

THE UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG

BY

DESLEA MAXINE KONZA

SCHOOL OF LEARNING STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
1990
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Abstract

This investigation of the aspirations and expectations of mildly intellectually disabled adolescents concerning their future level of independent functioning in the community reveals that achievement of full adult status is a keenly sought but elusive goal for them.

There is much evidence to suggest that adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities are greatly disadvantaged in efforts to assume adult roles. Difficulties in gaining satisfactory employment, living independently and establishing meaningful relationships outside the immediate family contribute to the problems these young people face in establishing a stable and secure self-concept which is both necessary for, and a product of, full adult status in our society.

Interviews with mildly intellectually disabled students, their parents and teachers reveal that the barriers to the achievement of their goals are not easily recognised by the students. Problems associated with the implementation of integration, administrative difficulties at the school and community levels, and the multiplier effect of the additional problems faced by so many of these families are seen to be the major causes of the students' disempowerment and failure to integrate into adult society.

The identification of pathways to power for people with intellectual disabilities and ways in which community members may facilitate this process, form the basis of this research.
Chapter 1

Introduction
Chapter 1

Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Study
This study investigates the expectations and aspirations of mildly intellectually disabled adolescents concerning their future lifestyle and levels of independence as young adults. The expectations and aspirations that their parents and teachers have for them, along with differences in perception between the students, parents and teachers are also examined. A survey of the services available for this group of people is included as a necessary adjunct to understanding the scope of the problem.

If such a study can do no more than reveal new information about the aspirations of mildly intellectually impaired students in the context of the services currently available for them, it will have been worthwhile. If its ultimate outcome proves to be greater support from the social system, so much the better.

1.2 Need for the Study
Democratic communities have some obligation to ensure reasonable access to appropriate employment and lifestyle opportunities for all of their members. The worldwide thrust towards "normalisation" (Doherty, 1982; Nirje, 1969; Warnock, 1976; Wolfensberger, 1970), the provision of as close to normal an environment as possible for people with disabilities, certainly supports the provision of such opportunities. Where a particular group experiences inequality of access, the need for some investigation should be taken as axiomatic.
There is some evidence to suggest that the needs of mildly disabled groups have been the focus of study much less often than those of more severely disabled groups (Brown, Halpern, Hasazi and Wehman, 1987), possibly because the needs of the more severely disabled individuals are perceived to be greater. With prevalence figures up to ten times those of the severely disabled group (Knowlton and Clark, 1987), the needs of mildly impaired individuals demand further attention.

This study should heighten awareness of the needs of mildly intellectually disabled students not only within the Department of Education, but also within the broader community. In many ways the Department works in isolation from other services. The study should help locate the school's contribution within the wider framework of services available for such students; it should increase effective liaison between the school and available post-school options and provide some empirical support to back demands for more, and more relevant, community support services. Such a study could increase the level of both community support and understanding of the rights and abilities of disabled people and provide them and their parents with longterm benefits. Because the targetted group belongs to a school population, answers to the research questions may have implications for the curriculum offered to these students.

Another major consideration is the probable effect on teachers of the current poor levels of community support for these students. The high turnover and low morale of teachers working in this field could be the result of a growing sense of futility as they see their graduating students lose confidence, skills and independence due to a lack of appropriate support in the community.

A final consideration is the social cost of high unemployment rates and a largely dissatisfied and disabled group of people within a community. An analysis of the probable causes of the identified problems is an initial step in finding solutions for both individuals and that wider community.
1.3 Background to the Study

There is no doubt that certain groups within our society are disadvantaged when seeking employment, accommodation and those social facilities which lead to an independent and fulfilling adult life. Women may still be seen as being disadvantaged in these areas (Burton, 1985; Game and Pringle, 1983), as may many migrant or ethnic populations (Connell, 1977; Jakubowicz, 1985; Marjoribanks, 1980; Western, 1983). Disabled people certainly suffer disadvantages when seeking employment and opportunities to participate fully in adult life (Hasazi, Gordon and Roe, 1985; Mithaug, Horiuchi and Fanning, 1985; Mithaug, Martin, Agran & Rusch, 1988; Richardson, Koller and Katz, 1988). Some of these disadvantages arise directly out of actual disability and others appear to be the result of societal attitudes and prejudices (Benz and Halpern, 1987; Brolin, 1983; Bullis and Foss, 1986; Neubert, Tilson and Ianacone, 1989).

For this researcher, contact over a period of years with mildly intellectually impaired secondary school students, their parents and teachers, has highlighted the difficulties these students face after leaving school - difficulties in gaining satisfactory employment and accommodation and difficulties participating in community life.

A recurring theme in these contacts has been the perceptions that these students, their parents and teachers have of the probable adult lifestyle of the students, how these perceptions of reality differ from the perceptions of the "ideal", and the impact these differences may have on self esteem, levels of achievement and integration into society. Do the facilities available in the community match the needs of the students? How may the aspirations of "significant others" affect the aspirations of the students? Are there important differences between the aspirations held by, and for, intellectually disabled students as to their future levels of independent functioning - as workers, partners, parents and as community members?
1.4 Questions to be Examined

The questions being asked are:

1.4.1 What are the expectations and aspirations of mildly intellectually impaired students, their parents and teachers relating to the students' future levels of independence in the following areas:
   i. residential circumstances;
   ii. vocational choice;
   iii. use of transport;
   iv. home management;
   v. leisure activities;
   vi. community involvement;
   vii. establishment of social relationships;
   viii. problem solving?

1.4.2 What employment, accommodation and lifestyle opportunities actually exist for this group in the South Coast and Illawarra region?

1.4.3 What are the consequences of any differences that may exist between expectation and aspiration, between the real and the ideal, for these groups of people?

1.5 Assumptions

An assumption is made that the population of student subjects, which was identified by their presence in an IM class, did have a mild degree of intellectual disability and that the identification procedures used by the Department of Education were accurate in themselves and were appropriately administered.
The basic assumption is also made that the interview questions were understood and that the answers given to the interview questions were an accurate reflection of the interviewees' opinions.

1.6 Basis in Social Justice for this Research
The impetus for this research comes from the belief that all individuals have equal rights to a fulfilling adult lifestyle with maximum control over all decisions that will affect that lifestyle. The philosophy of normalisation for people with disabilities is an accepted basis for this study. While supportive of mainstream accommodation, employment and recreational opportunities for people with disabilities, the present researcher is wary of the exposure to damaging experiences that can occur under the banner of normalisation.

1.7 Theoretical Framework
The social construction of adulthood and the prerequisites for successful achievement of full adult status form the theoretical framework for this study. The development of a positive and secure picture of "self" is seen to be both a prerequisite for, and derivative of, the attainment of full adult status in our society. The absence of real power and control over all important elements of adult existence is seen to be a critical factor in the failure of so many mildly intellectually disabled people to achieve "adulthood". If there is a single term that encapsulates, for purposes of practical action, the issue of needs for this disadvantaged group, it is empowerment. Throughout all the work that follows in this thesis, the identification of pathways to empowerment is the true goal.

1.8 Variables
In identifying variables it is usual to locate and define first of all independent variables or variables that could be considered to be influential in determining some outcome or other. It is also usual for dependent variables to be identified and for measures to be developed. In studies of the kind undertaken in this thesis, however, it is possible to identify certain variables as independent when one kind of question is being asked, and
as dependent, or quasi-dependent when another kind of question is being asked. The following classification is a preferred or main classification for the purposes of this study on the basis of the main questions. There are occasions, however, when the status of a variable will be changed to explore an interesting new element which has arisen during data collection. There are other variables, the status of which is unclear at this stage; they may be independent, dependent or intervening. For the purposes of this study, they are discussed in associationist terms without implication for cause and effect. They are highlighted, however, in such a way that action could be taken in regard to them by enterprising system administrators.

1.8.1 Quasi-Independent Variables
The following are quasi-independent variables relating to the student:
age, sex, school attended, functional level, additional disabilities, indicators of obesity, state of health and emotional or behavioural disorders.

1.8.2 Quasi-Dependent Variables
The following are quasi-dependent variables relating to the student:
self-esteem, anticipated future involvement in sport or exercise-related activity, the impact of being labelled, anticipated and preferred functioning through a range of life variables (defined in 1.8.5).

The following are quasi-dependent variables relating to the school environment:
levels of academic and social integration at school.

1.8.3 Other Variables
Other variables included are:
incidence of intellectual impairment in immediate family, level of environmental noise, living circumstances and parental awareness of existing services.
This attempt to conceptualise the study in terms traditional for empirical research is not intended to be hard and fast so much as eleborative. In essence, this study is a naturalistic analysis of the environment of the IM status child, with many surrounding influences likely to contribute - along with IM status - to the critically important outcomes of:

a. what the child thinks his or her prospects are;

b. what the parents think the child's prospects are; and

c. what the teacher thinks the child's prospects are.

As will be seen by the end of the exposition, much more can be revealed about the nature of variables (in conventional, empirical terms) than could possibly have been available at the outset of the study.

1.9 Definition of Terms

1.9.1 IM Student: a student currently enrolled in a secondary IM class in the South Coast Region of N.S.W Department of Education schools. These students are assessed as being within the I.Q. range 55 - 80 on an individual test of general ability.

1.9.2 Teacher: the teacher who is appointed to the I.M. class; that is, the teacher with whom the students would spend the greater part of their time. Those teachers who teach the students for some mainstream subjects are not included.

1.9.3 Parents: the primary caregiving adult or adults in each student's case. In most cases, the primary caregiving adult was a natural parent, although other sample members were adoptive parents, step-parents or grandparents. Forty eight of the primary caregivers were female and twelve were male. Advice from the teacher and student was often useful in determining the primary caregiver. In some cases both parents requested to be present at the interview and complex arrangements were made by parents to facilitate this. During the course of the interview it was possible to
determine the primary caregiver. In all cases where both parents were present, there was a high level of consistency in their responses.

1.9.4 Illawarra and South Coast Region: The South Coast Region as defined by the N.S.W. Department of Education is an area extending from Stanwell Tops in the north to Eden on the South Coast and extending south west to Cooma and Queanbeyan.

1.9.5 Life Variables
The life variables examined in this research are those related to independent functioning in the community: domestic skills, financial management skills, use of public transport, employment skills, recreational activities, social relationships and support network.

1.10 Delimitations
Only those students in secondary IM classes at Bomaderry H.S., Goulburn H.S., Kanahooka H.S., Keira H.S., Smiths Hill H.S., Warilla H.S. and Warrawong H.S. whose parents gave consent to be involved in the study, along with their parents and class teachers, formed the sample.

1.11 Limitations
There were a number of limitations on the construction of the sample. Because students in Departmental schools were to be interviewed, permission from the Department of Education, school principals, parents and the students themselves was required. Departmental permission was granted to approach the school principals. One school was not approached at all because no female students were enrolled in the IM class. Of the nine school principals approached, two expressed some reservations and, although their fears were somewhat allayed after further discussion, these schools were not used in the eventual sample. The difficulties associated with organising interpreters for ten parents in an area of high ethnic population meant that those parents (and, therefore, their children) were not invited to participate in the study. In three further instances,
parents agreed to participate but failed on several occasions to appear for interview appointments. Of the seventy parents approached, four declined to participate.

The final sample consisted of sixty students, sixty parents (plus seventeen who made up pairs) and the ten teachers who taught those students. Although the teachers comprise a considerably smaller sample than the students or parents, they were interviewed separately for all participating students.

Parents were given the option of choosing the place of interview. Most chose either the school or their home. It became apparent that some parents were uncomfortable even in the chosen setting. Some of those interviewed on school premises appeared to be intimidated by their surroundings and/or by the questions despite attempts to make the settings as non-threatening as possible. The home circumstances also appeared to be an embarrassment to some interviewees. Therefore doubt may surround the accuracy of some responses, whether through deliberate misleading or through uneasiness.

1.12 Organisation of this Thesis

This thesis is presented in six chapters. The introductory chapter establishes the need for the study and provides some background to the questions being asked. Chapter 2 reviews literature pertinent to the research and Chapter 3 outlines the research design and methodological procedures used. In Chapter 4 support services available for intellectually disabled people in the Illawarra region are identified. The fifth chapter reports the findings of the study. A discussion of the findings, conclusions and recommendations are included in Chapter 6.

Origin-specific spelling in direct quotes has been accepted without the insertion of "(sic)".
Case notes to which reference is made after direct quotes from the data are held separately.

The Modern Language Association (1977) system of referencing has been adopted throughout the presentation of this thesis.
Chapter 2

A Review of the Related Literature
Chapter 2

A Review of the Related Literature

The sections on the construction of adulthood and the attainment of adult status, along with those relating to self esteem, are best understood when bedded in the concepts of adolescence and utilizing an understanding of the developmental goals of adolescence. For these reasons, the literature review begins with a preliminary discussion of the latter points.

2.1 The Study of Adolescence

Adolescence has been widely studied this century. Prior to the industrial revolution, either the rituals of initiation or the lack of occupational choice made the transition from childhood to adulthood, if not easy, at least restricted to a small and finite period of time. "Adolescence", as we now know it, did not exist. As society became progressively more industrialised, it could support older children while they learned more of the skills and knowledge that society needed (Smart and Smart, 1973). As education extended the period of childhood well into physical and sexual maturity, adolescence became that period between the world of the dependent child and that of the independent adult.

During adolescence, virtually every aspect of development undergoes change. Dramatic physical changes occur, thinking becomes increasingly abstract and new social roles evolve. The metaphor of the bridge has often been used in discussions of adolescent development. However, as Douvan and Adelson (1973) point out, the passage between the two worlds is not simple and unidirectional, but often wavering and with much backtracking.
The traditional view is that adolescence is a period of psychological "storm and stress" as adolescents struggle to achieve autonomy and independence (Cameron, 1963; Erikson, 1968; Freud, 1969; Hall, 1904; Jersild, 1963; Jessor and Jessor, 1977). Other research suggests that for many the transition is made gradually and without great upheaval (Douvan and Adelson, 1973; Dusack and Flaherty, 1981; Hill, 1980; Offer, Marcus and Offer, 1970). All researchers agree, however, that during adolescence, experimentation with different social and sexual roles, vocational plans, the development of particular attitudes and behaviours and emotional and physical separation from parents gradually lead to an adult pattern of behaviour and the formation of an adult identity.

2.2 The Developmental Goals of Adolescence

Several theorists have analysed the tasks of adolescence, successful completion of which lead to entry into the adult world. Two well known theories only will be discussed briefly at this point in order to exemplify the field.

Erikson (1963) saw puberty as the commencement of the fifth psychosocial stage of development which he called "identity versus role confusion". Throughout adolescence, the individual becomes increasingly concerned with how other people view him or her and in order to establish a self-concept which is acceptable both to others and self, experiments with a variety of different social roles are undertaken. Throughout this time there is an inevitable period of role confusion during which the individual lacks stability and continuity. The task of adolescence, according to Erikson, is to come finally to a realistic appraisal of one's own identity.

Havighurst (1972) identified a range of specific tasks of adolescence which included:

achieveing more mature relations with peers;

adopting the appropriate sex role;
recognising one's bodily capabilities and limitations;
reaching emotional independence from parents;
initiating preparation for a vocational role and economic independence;
beginning preparations for family life;
developing socially responsible behaviour; and
acquiring moral judgement and moral behaviour.

Havighurst also contended that individuals who successfully achieve one task are likely to achieve others, while those who fail are more likely to fail at others.

Intellectually disabled individuals face the same challenges as their regular peers during adolescence; however, as pointed out by Zetlin and Turner (1985), these challenges must be faced with cognitive competencies similar to those of much younger children. Although both childhood and adolescence have been widely studied this century, there was a dearth of research on the particular problems faced by young intellectually disabled individuals until the seventies.

The increasing acceptance of the principles of normalisation since that time has meant that the needs of intellectually disabled people have been investigated to a greater extent. Brown, Halpern, Hasazi and Wehman (1987) highlight the fact that greater concentration has been focused on the needs of the severely disabled, as their needs were perceived to be greater. When one considers that the mildly disabled outnumber the severely disabled by approximately ten to one (Knowlton and Clark, 1987), it is apparent that some reorientation should occur if these individuals are to achieve their potential.

Also noteworthy has been a serious neglect of the older disabled student (Cullinan and Epstein, 1979; Goodman and Mann, 1976). The emphasis has always been on the younger child, reflecting the belief that preventative and therapeutic efforts with
younger children have a greater chance of success. While it is recognised that the early years are crucial, the needs of the adolescent disabled group must not be overlooked.

2.3 The Construction of Adulthood

When attempting to record and analyse the expectations that mildly intellectually impaired adolescents have of their future as adults in the community, it is imperative to understand just what it is that "adulthood" means to them. What are the elements that construct "adulthood" in our society? Do they differ for people with disabilities?

2.3.1 The Significance of Work for the Attainment of Adult Status

Although there are many yardsticks to measure the successful transition from adolescence to adulthood, it has been argued that work is the most significant indicator of one's place in adult society (Blakers, 1978; O'Toole, 1973; Clarizio, 1979). Not only does it largely determine the material quality of life, but it also says much about levels of competence and responsibility.

According to the OECD Report on Disabled Youth (Kelley-Laine, 1988, p.26-29) work fulfils a number of important psychological and social functions.

Firstly, work develops and preserves a sense of personal identity as an adult because of the responsibility, dignity and independence associated with it. Secondly, ever since people have developed beyond a strictly subsistence existence, work done by an individual has demonstrated an ability to contribute to the community. This demonstrates further responsibility and usefulness which disabled individuals often feel they lack. A third important function of work is the opportunity it provides for widening social contacts which assist social development and the enjoyment of life. A fourth important psychological function of work is the structure and routine it provides for daily life, a framework most people need to avoid boredom and depression. Because many disabled students have come out of a highly structured environment, it is
considered to be even more important for them. Finally, the report concludes that work provides further opportunities for secondary socialisation. At work, individuals may try out different roles and distance themselves from the immediate family setting. The economic, personal and psychological value of work is also discussed by Kieman and Ciborowski (1986) and Kieman and Stark (1986), who arrive at similar conclusions.

The significance of work is seen also in the impact of unemployment on individuals, families and societies. Since the middle of the 1970s unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, has been of concern to many Western communities as the effects of technological advances and fundamental changes in the economy and labour market have become increasingly apparent.

The following comments were selected from submissions made to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (1989, p. 125) during their inquiry into homeless children:

"Lack of self esteem from failing to obtain recognised work...can isolate and encourage withdrawal habits in the person involved. This in turn reduces the likelihood of employment and makes the situation worse."

"Unemployment consistently ranks among the top concerns of Australians, and young Australians in particular...even the apprehension of unemployment has been associated with feelings of hopelessness, low self-esteem, emotional problems and delinquency among young people."

"Work plays an important part in the transition from adolescence to adulthood, and when young people cannot find employment there is a greater likelihood of a slowing down in psychosocial development."
"...duration of unemployment has been associated with the deterioration in one's sense of well-being, in mental health and self esteem and, indeed, all health problems."

The impact of unemployment was also recognised by the Honourable Ray Marshall in his opening statement at an OECD Conference in 1977:

"Unemployment in any form is destructive to the individual who is out of work and to the society in which that individual lives.....We cannot afford to lose the productivity and the contributions of people who are able to work and who want to work...not having a job for a protracted period of time can erode their self confidence and sense of individual worth...The despair and hopelessness produced by youth unemployment can damage the social fabric" (Kelley-Laine, 1988, p26).

There is disagreement in the literature as to whether or not people with mild intellectual disabilities are more affected than other groups by unemployment. In a survey of over 1500 facilities and organisations throughout the United States, Kieman and Ciborowski (1986) found that 76% of developmentally disabled persons retained their position in open employment for at least sixty days. Macmillan (1977) found that, in the majority of cases, the mildly intellectually disabled lose their "deviance" after leaving school. Although they are not as successful in post-school adjustment as their average I.Q. peers, they do marry and raise children and provide food and shelter for their families. Some reviews of literature between 1930 and 1970 found that mildly intellectually impaired people "disappeared" into the rest of the community and that "the majority" or "substantial numbers" or "a high proportion" made satisfactory adjustments in the areas of employment (cited in Fardig, Algozzine, Schwartz, Hensel and Westling, 1985).

Other research, however, has been less encouraging. Investigations carried out by the Steering Group on Youth Unemployment following the O.E.C.D. conference in 1977
(reported in Kelley-Laine, 1988) revealed that the youth population was not evenly affected by unemployment, but that youth "with multiple socio-economic disadvantages, e.g. lack of education, physical and/or mental handicaps or early pregnancies" formed the bulk of the group. In 1983, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights reported unemployment rates among handicapped individuals ranging from 50% to 70%.

Hasazi, Gordon and Roe (1985), Mithaug, Horiuchi and Fanning (1985) and Mithaug, Martin, Agran and Rusch (1988) reported high rates of unemployment among intellectually disabled youth. A longterm study conducted by Schalock and Lilley (1986) found that, although many mildly intellectually disabled individuals were initially able to secure employment, retention rates dropped to 31% over a longer period of time.

An intensive study of 154 mildly impaired subjects by Richardson, Koller and Katz (1988) showed that both males and females with mild intellectual impairments were significantly more often unemployed than their non-handicapped but similarly non-qualified peers. Disabled females fared even less well than their male counterparts in studies carried out by Hasazi et al (1985), and Edgar (1987 and 1988).

Studies in the United States reveal that the unemployment rate for their intellectually disabled population is four to five times the national average (Fardig, Algozzine, Schwartz, Hensel and Westling, 1985; Hasazi, Gordon, Roe, Finck, Hull and Salembier, 1985). The need for further longitudinal research in the area of employment for this group of people has been highlighted by Benz and Halpern (1987), Neubert, Tilson and Ianacone (1989) and Zetlin and Hosseini (1989).

There has been debate recently about the relative merits of open and supported employment for intellectually disabled people. A number of studies confirm that
competitive employment of persons with disabilities enhances feelings of self-worth and increases the normalisation of these individuals, both in self-perception and society's perception of them (Schloss, Wolf and Schloss, 1987; Scott and Sarkes, 1982; Seyforth, Hill, Orelove, McMillan and Wehman, 1985). In addition to the benefits gained in the personal and self esteem areas, more practical advantages are apparent. Open employment leads to greater self sufficiency and economic independence than supported employment (Horner and Bellamy, 1979; Kiernan and Stark, 1986; Schalock, 1983; Wehman, 1981).

The productivity and earning capacity of developmentally disabled people is now considered to be much higher than has been believed in the past (Brown, Shiraga, Ford, VanDeventer, Nisbet, Loomis and Sweet, 1986; Conley, 1986; Gaylord-Ross, Forte, Storey, Gaylord-Ross and Jameson, 1987; Wehman, 1981). Zetlin and Turner (1985) found that their sample of 46 mildly intellectually disabled individuals held normal expectations for themselves during adolescence and the realisation that employment opportunities would be hindered by their limited academic achievements caused great frustration and despair. A later study by Zetlin and Hosseini (1989) confirmed these results. Irregular part-time work which was menial and boring left the adolescents "depressed and open to self-doubt" (p.411).

Barriers to Employment of Disabled People

Edgar (1988) reported in his review of studies of the employment of intellectually impaired school leavers throughout the past decade that the primary method used to obtain employment is the family contact network. It would appear that, particularly during periods of high unemployment, disabled people without a family or community advocate are going to fare less well than their non-disabled peers on the job market because employers will perceive them to be less productive and will have a greater choice of applicants for positions.
A number of studies have found that, although intellectually disabled people are often capable of performing the actual work required of them in open employment, many experience difficulties relating to the interpersonal interactions that occur in the workplace (Bullis and Foss, 1986; Cheney and Foss, 1984; Domino and McGarty, 1972; Foss and Peterson, 1981; Greenspan and Schoutz, 1982; Halpern, Raffield, Irvin and Link, 1975; Irvin, Halpern and Reynolds, 1977; Jackson, King and Heller, 1981; Kolstoe, 1961).

Further barriers emerge through the prejudices that remain in the community. With relatively high unemployment rates in mainstream society, the view is held by some that employment of disabled people will lead to unnecessary unemployment of "regular" people. Holders of this view would argue that in the "real" world, no special consideration should be made for people who cannot succeed unassisted. In times of economic restraint, the argument would continue, priorities must be set and the limited resources allocated to those who have the greatest chance of success (Brolin, 1983).

2.3.2 The Significance of Independent Living for the Attainment of Adult Status

Although there is much evidence of the importance of employment in adult fulfilment, there are many others factors that contribute to the quality of life. The achievement of full adult status requires, to some extent, separation from parents in the physical sense, as well as psychologically, socially and economically. There is ample evidence to support the fact that most mildly intellectually disabled adolescents aspire to the same independence and autonomy that non-disabled individuals do (Brantlinger, 1985; Brantlinger, 1988; Koegal and Edgerton, 1982; Zetlin and Turner, 1985).

Further evidence, however, reveals that many intellectually disabled individuals fail to integrate successfully into their communities and experience unsatisfactory relationships and daily living environments (Rau, Spooner, and Fimian, 1989; Zetlin and Hosseini,
There is also significant research to confirm that most intellectually disabled school leavers live with family, relatives or friends without much hope of participating in their community as most non-disabled persons participate (Halpern, Close and Nelson, 1986; Hasazi, Gordon and Roe, 1985; Johnson, Bruininks and Thurlow, 1987; Mithaug, Horiuchi and Fanning, 1985; Rusch and Phelps, 1987; Wehman, Kregel and Barcus, 1985). According to a study by Mithaug, Horiuchi and Fanning (1985), approximately two thirds of handicapped students continue to live with their parents as adults. In Zetlin and Turner's (1985) ethnographic study of forty-six mildly intellectually impaired young adults who were living independently, it was found that fifteen of them were still highly dependent on their parents in virtually every dimension of their lives. All of this group displayed some problem behaviour and relied almost exclusively on their immediate families for social interaction.

**Barriers to Independent Living for Intellectually Disabled Individuals**

Deficiencies in service availability for people with intellectual disabilities that would enable them to live independently, and make use of community social, leisure and transport facilities have been well documented (Bruininks, Hill, Lakin and White, 1985; Calkins, Walker, Bacon-Prue, Gibson, Martinson and Offner, 1985; both cited in Johnson, Bruininks and Thurlow, 1987; McDonnell and Hardman, 1985; Stodden and Boone, 1987; Wilgosh, Waggoner and Adams, 1988).

There is also some evidence that mildly intellectually disabled individuals themselves reject support services in an attempt to shed their "different" label (Zetlin and Hosseini, 1989). This could result in failure of attempts to live independently and their eventual return to the family home or a supported environment.

Convincing evidence exists that many intellectually disabled children are born into families with significant additional problems, including intellectual impairment in one or both parents, poverty and unemployment (Brantlinger, 1988;). They are often excluded
from, or do not attempt to use, community services and resources. This results in what has been called "an inter-generational cycle of deprivation" (Matters, 1989) which is very difficult to break. Thus many of the intellectually disabled adolescents do not have appropriate models of self-care or independent living that would assist them in the achievement of these goals for themselves.

Different problems arise when the disabled young person belongs to an overprotective family. Accepting that the disabled young person, like his or her non-disabled peers, will want to achieve some independence from the family unit, is difficult. In these cases, dependence is encouraged in the belief that the young disabled person could not succeed alone. The concern is that errors of decision may have greatly magnified consequences for intellectually disabled adolescents in comparison to those of their regular peers.

Zetlin and Turner (1985), found that their sample of subjects resented interference and overprotectiveness on the part of their parents during their adolescent years. As is the case in many families, the gradual achievement of independence was seen to be the source of some parent-child conflict. Restrictions on participation in "normal" activities such as choice of dress and friends, use of the telephone and the trying of new experiences, were greatly resented. These parents are more likely to encourage dependency and obedience than increasing independence.

Zola (1988:b) is critical of the overprotective aim of many services which deny the individual the risk-taking that is inherent in true independence. He quotes Perske (1972):

"To deny any retarded person his fair share of risk experiences is to further cripple him for healthy living" (cited in Zola, 1988:b, p.26).
2.3.3 The Significance of the Development of Relationships for the Attainment of Adult Status

Further indicators of adult status are the establishment of social relationships outside the immediate family, marriage and parenthood. Like their non-disabled peers, these are keenly sought goals of intellectually disabled adolescents (Brantlinger, 1985; Brantlinger, 1988; Koegal and Edgerton, 1982; Zetlin and Turner, 1985). It could not be questioned that the skills inherent in the establishment of a satisfactory domestic environment and the successful raising of children are easily as complex as those necessary for successful employment.

Barriers to the Development of Relationships for Intellectually Disabled Individuals

Unlike the growing approval of open employment for intellectually disabled people (Schafer, Hill, Seyforth and Wehman, 1987), marriage and parenthood for this group is still highly controversial (Brantlinger, 1988; Kelley-Laine, 1988). In Brantlinger's study (1988) of 22 teachers' opinions of the the parenting skills of their mildly intellectually impaired students, many areas of concern were identified. Lack of control over conception, reduced options when faced with unplanned pregnancies, poor parenting skills, lack of "common sense", poor role models in their own home of adequate parenting, narrow sex role definitions, reduced abilities to provide intellectual stimulation and appropriate attitudes regarding educational and vocational aspirations to their children, the inability of their students to maintain longterm supportive relationships and increased chances of poverty were seen to militate greatly against the chances of successful parenting. Concern was also expressed about the "likely continuation of intergenerational poverty/poor parenting/special education cycle". The fear that the next generation would also suffer some impairment was of major concern to the teachers.
Zetlin and Turner (1985) found that their sample of parents often overprotected the adolescents in response to their own anxieties about their child's emerging adulthood. Severe restrictions were placed on their children, relationships were carefully scrutinised and in some cases individuals were sterilised to prevent pregnancies. The effect of these restrictions was either to inhibit greatly their sexual and social development or to provoke defiant behaviour.

An interesting study conducted by Wolraich and Siperstein (1986) compared the expectations of physicians, psychologists, social workers and educators for the vocational and residential placement of intellectually disabled individuals and for the level of their abilities. Results revealed that the physicians were significantly more pessimistic than the other professional groups in each area, even those who had had considerable contact with disabled individuals.

When one considers the impact that advice from doctors can have on parents, along with the impact conflicting advice from different professionals can have, these results (which supported earlier work by the same researchers) should be of concern. The lack of confidence of professionals closely associated with the disabled adolescents with regard to their abilities and potential, whether warranted or not, could in itself become a barrier to the fulfilment of these aspirations. The importance and the effects of the attitudes of others will be discussed in more detail later.

2.3.4 The Significance of Personal Growth and the Development of Identity for the Attainment of Adult Status

Because of the associated responsibilities, successful management of the adult role demands a secure and stable identity - one that shares equal status with other adults. Generally, as skills and knowledge accumulate, social relationships expand, greater community participation occurs, vocational aspirations eventuate and life partners are chosen, individuals come to see themselves as having equal status with adult members
of their community. This emergence of a secure and adult identity should be the positive outcome of the adolescent period (Erikson, 1974). These achievements are not always easy, however, even for non-disabled persons.

Barriers to the Development of Stable Identity for Intellectually Disabled Adolescents

Due to the difficulties associated with the achievement of each of the previously discussed indicators of adulthood, individuals with intellectual disabilities have great difficulty being accepted as adult members of society. A vicious cycle occurs. The establishment of a stable and secure identity is both necessary for, and a product of, entry into adult society. The cumulative effect of failure in each of the areas crucial to adult membership ensures that intellectually disabled individuals have little opportunity to achieve a stable and secure identity or, as some would express it, a *positive self-concept* or *high self-esteem*. This lack of positive self concept then militates against their chances of ever assuming full adult status.

Just how the concept of self develops over time has been the object of research for many years. More recently, it has become a popular theme in the media as possible connections between low self-esteem and such social problems as drug abuse and delinquency have been made. It would be impossible within the framework of this thesis to discuss in any detail the volumes that have been written about self-esteem. Because of the importance of self-concept and self-esteem to the development of each individual, however, and because we have seen how failure to enter adult society affects the identity or self-concept of intellectually disabled people, some further discussion of these concepts will be offered.

2.4 Historical Background to the Study of Self Concept and Self Esteem

A number of current writers in the Special Education field (Beane and Lipke, 1986; Gurney, 1988) state that the present perspective on the importance of the "self" may be
traced to the work of James (1892). James defined the self as the sum total of all an individual can call his or her own. Firstly, there are the constituents - body, traits, abilities, material possessions, family, friends, enemies, occupation, and so on; secondly, the feelings and emotions they arouse; and thirdly, the acts they prompt. The picture one had of "self" was seen as a major factor in motivating behaviour.

There has been consistent agreement among a range of theorists on the importance of social interaction in the development of a picture of "self". Cooley's (1902) major contribution was to highlight the intimate relationship between the individual and the social environment in which he lived. Cooley coined the term "looking glass self" to describe the way in which an individual's self-concept is determined largely by the perceived reactions of others in social situations.

Sullivan (1953) refined this notion of the importance of feedback by theorising that feedback received from particular people was perceived by the individual as being more important than feedback from others. He coined the term "significant others" to describe those with the greatest influence. Mothers are generally considered to be "significant others", particularly by children. Others who fall into this category may be spouses, teachers and friends. Sullivan believed that an image of self only existed in relation to other people - "personality" was a hypothetical construct which could not be isolated from interpersonal situations. The formation of self depended on the types of relationships individuals had with the important people in their lives. Thus relationships with parents, peers and teachers may play a vital part in the development of the self picture. Further discussion of the parts played by these figures will be discussed in 2.4.1.

Erikson (1968) was also interested in the way a child's personality and self concept were affected by the social environment in which the child was raised. Erikson believed that throughout life there are eight major stages, each of which involves a
developmental crisis. The stages are also interdependent in that later stages depend upon how earlier crises are resolved. We have already looked briefly at the stage Erikson referred to as "Identity versus Role Confusion", which occurs throughout adolescence. Successful resolution of the earlier conflicts (Trust versus Mistrust during infancy; Autonomy versus Shame and Doubt during the second year of life; Initiative versus Guilt during early childhood and Industry versus Inferiority during the primary school years) should provide the foundation for the search for identity. As Woolfolk (1987) expresses it:

A basic sense of trust, if established, has prepared the young person to find people and ideas to have faith in. A firm sense of autonomy gives the adolescent courage to insist upon the chance to decide freely about her or his own career and lifestyle. The initiative that prompted the young child to play lawyer or painter can help the adolescent take steps toward assuming an adult role in reality. And out of a strong sense of industry can grow a feeling of competence, a belief in one's ability to make meaningful contributions to society (p.93).

Snygg and Combs (1949) postulated a "phenomenal" self which was as the individual perceived it to be, whether or not this bore any relationship to what others saw as the "truth". The strength and the significance of these perceptions was recognised by Rogers (1951) who saw the self concept as a powerful force which directed immediate behaviour and determined future development. Maslow (1970) also saw the image of self as a motivating force which propelled the individual towards the meeting of a hierarchy of needs, the pinnacle of which was "self-actualisation".

Bandura (1986) is a more recent theorist who is convinced of the effects of the surrounding environment on all types of learning. One of Bandura's primary concerns is the socialisation process. In the context of a developing self picture, he realised that
parents and other people often in contact could shape the personalities of their children via their own behaviour as "agenda setters", "reinforcers" and "models".

Coopersmith (1967) is the recognised authority on the antecedents of self-esteem and although he developed his self-esteem inventory by in-depth interviewing only the mothers of 10-12 year old boys, the variables he isolated are useful. Maccoby (1980) simplified Coopersmith's major findings by stating that parents of boys with high self-esteem had the following attitudes and practices:

1. they were accepting, affectionate and involved, showing genuine concern for the child's interests and problems;
2. they enforced rules consistently and encouraged the boys to uphold high standards of behavior;
3. they preferred non-coercive types of discipline; and
4. they were democratic in that the child's opinions were considered.

Wylie (1979), although critical of methodological problems in Coopersmith's work also concluded that a child's level of self-esteem is related to the parent's level of regard for the child. Rogers (1951) also believed that "unconditional positive regard" was an essential prerequisite to the development of high self-esteem and so would support Coopersmith's basic contentions.

2.5 Recurring Themes in the Development of Self-Esteem.
Two recurring themes throughout this discussion of self-esteem have been the importance of social interaction to the development of an individual's self-esteem and the powerful motivating force of the self-esteem.

2.5.1 Importance of "Significant Others"
All of the theorists mentioned acknowledge the importance of social interaction to an individual's self picture. Relationships with, and the opinions of, parents, siblings,
peers and teachers, all of whom would be regarded by Sullivan as "significant others", are of particular importance.

The lowered expectations of the parents of intellectually disabled individuals have been noted by Hill, Seyforth, Banks, Wehman and Orelove (1987). In that study, parents were asked to state their preference for the optimal vocational setting for their child and the extent to which they agreed with the concept that work should be a normal part of life of their child. A discrepancy was found between parents' perceptions of the importance of work and the relative unimportance of work outcomes. Although they wanted more normalised working conditions for their children, no interest was shown in increased wages, promotion opportunities or increased responsibility for them. It appeared that they preferred the safety of a protected environment and guaranteed financial aid rather than any expectations for more adult-like behaviour and conditions for their children. The writers concluded that much more communication was needed to improve parental expectations for the vocational potential of their children and to evaluate more critically the level of existing services. It is interesting to note that there was no recommendation for the disabled persons themselves, even those categorised as mildly handicapped, to become more involved in evaluation of the services and assertive in their demands for more equitable work outcomes. The desired outcome was seen to be rather a more effective parent/professional partnership to act in the advocacy role.

Rudie and Riedl (1984) also found that their sample of parents had low expectations for their mildly intellectually disabled children and expressed little interest in exploring options or investigating alternatives for their children's placement.

Zetlin and Turner's (1985) study revealed the reluctance of many parents to allow their intellectually disabled adolescents to participate in many of the normative experiences of
adolescence. In their sample, children of overprotective parents displayed great dependency and/or deviancy.

The reduced expectations of parents for their intellectually disabled children will, according to the theories of self-esteem that have been discussed previously, have great impact on those individuals' feelings of self worth.

Rejection by siblings and peers was reported by over half of Zetlin and Turner's (1985) sample of mildly intellectually impaired adolescents with 85% recalling many episodes of teasing. Poor peer relationships and other social difficulties were major concerns of the parent sample in a small, qualitative study by Wilgosh, Waggoner and Adams (1988). Studies over the past fifteen years have noted the fact that disabled students are viewed by regular students as less socially acceptable (Ray, 1985) and are more likely to be ignored or involved in negative interactions with their regular peers (Brian and Wheeler, 1976; Jones, Sowell, Jones and Butler, 1981).

Brantlinger's (1988) study (discussed in 2.2.3) noted the generally pessimistic view of the teachers of intellectually disabled students in her sample of the successful future integration of their students into the community. Stephens and Braun (1980) found in their sample of over 1000 teachers that primary grade teachers had much more positive attitudes towards exceptional children than did secondary teachers. The writers believed that as subject matter becomes more important, teachers become less accepting of individual differences. The "student" emphasis of primary schools appears to be replaced by a "subject" emphasis in the secondary school. The negative attitudes of regular teachers towards students with disabilities have been well documented (Harasymiw and Horne, 1975; Hudson, Graham and Warner, 1979; Larrivee, 1981; Salend and Johns, 1983; Schmelkin, 1981). Further studies note that teachers are strongly influenced by their expectations based on preconceived attitudes and
experiences (Dunn, 1968; Gurney, 1988; Rosenthal and Jacobson, 1968; Warnock, 1978).

The negative opinions and reduced expectations of significant people in the lives of intellectually disabled individuals have the effect of labelling the individual as "inadequate" in some way. Zetlin and Turner (1985) found that for 84% of their sample, it was during the adolescent period that the personal realisation was made that they were "different". Many subjects reported great frustration when they realised that their normal expectations of graduating from high school, dating, gaining employment and living independently were unlikely to be met. While the prospect of achieving independent living status, employment and material possessions contributes to self worth and provide security, the realisation that these outcomes are unlikely may be seen to have a depressing effect on the self-esteem of these young people.

The extent to which special class placement contributes to these feelings may be of further interest. The practice of classifying individuals (which is what special class placement, in effect, does) has become a major social issue in recent times and particularly so since the philosophy of normalisation has become popular. A number of positive effects of labelling have been identified, such as improving communication among researchers, refining classification, diagnosis and treatment sequences, increasing awareness and focussing attention for funding and resource provision (Algozzine and Mercer, 1980; Gallagher, 1976; Johnson, 1978). It could be argued that special educational provisions for intellectually disabled students would be impossible without their initial identification and classification.

The negative aspects of labelling, however, have also been recognised. Labelling can affect the perceptions of the labelled individual as well as those with whom that individual comes into contact. Labels may cause individuals to develop negative feelings about themselves and thus to act differently, resulting in restricted social,
emotional and academic growth. Labels may cause others to view the labelled individual negatively and will thereby affect any interactions between the two (Eggert, 1988; Gallagher, 1976; Rowitz and Gunn, 1984). Algozzine and Mercer (1980) also stated that labels have been shown to be "expectancy-generating stimuli" in interpersonal relationships.

It would appear that intellectually disabled adolescents face increased difficulties in efforts to establish a stable picture of self so essential for the formation of an adult identity. The overwhelming picture is of a group of people with chronically low self-esteem.

2.5.2 The Motivating Force of Self-Esteem

Cooley (1902) pre-empted more recent theorists in relating self-esteem to the concept of power and control. Explaining what he referred to as "self-feeling" he wrote that it:
"...appears to be associated with ideas of the exercise of power, of being a cause..." (as quoted in Harter, 1983, p.335).

Many years later, Rotter (1954) developed the notion of "locus of control". He suggested that some individuals have an internal locus of control, that is, they believe their own skills or capabilities will control their lives. Others have an external locus of control, believing that outside forces will decide their fate. The justifications or explanations individuals use to explain success and failure are the basis of attribution theories which explain motivation.

Weiner (1979) related attribution theory to student success and failure. He suggested that most of the causes to which students attribute success or failure exist along three different dimensions: as either internal or external; stable or unstable, or as controllable or uncontrollable. The internal/external dimension is similar to Rotter's notion.
Bandura's concept of "self efficacy", one's "belief about personal competence in a situation", also appears to be related to this dimension.

The stable/unstable dimension is related to expectations of the future. If students attribute success or failure to relatively stable factors such as ability, they would expect similar results in future tasks. If, however, they attribute the outcome to unstable factors such as luck, there would not necessarily be similar results in the future.

The control dimension allows that if success was attributed by students to factors they believed they could control, such as level of study, similar future results could be controlled. If outcomes were attributed to some factor they could not control, such as the teacher's mood, future events could be similarly affected by such arbitrary factors.

If students attribute their failures to internal, stable and uncontrollable causes such as a belief in their lack of ability, serious problems of motivation occur. Often they become victims of "learned helplessness", a conviction that nothing they do will make any difference. Greer and Wethered (1984) explain learned helplessness as that phenomenon wherein people are repeatedly exposed to situations beyond their control, resulting in passivity, decreased interest and reduced initiation of responses. This could well be the response so many IM teachers see in their students every day.

The absence of power or control in their lives would appear to be a critical factor in the poor self-esteem of intellectually disabled adolescents. If, in line with recent changes in legislation, disabled people are to assume the rights of full adult status they have been denied for so long, they must also assume the power that adult status infers. Recognition of the connection between power and adult rights is behind the recent agitation for changes in the roles of disabled individuals.
2.6 Empowerment: The Right of People with Disabilities

While the 1970s saw the move towards a more normalised environment for people with disabilities emerging from Scandinavia and the United States (Nirje, 1969, Wolfensberger, 1972) the first decade of this move did not incorporate, to any great extent, the involvement of people with disabilities at the policy or implementation levels (Eisenberger, 1982). During the last decade, however, policies concerning services for people with disabilities have evolved rapidly. The introduction of the Disability Services Act at the national level in 1986 incorporated a move away from the care or services model to a client empowerment model in which consumer participation in the planning and provision of the services would be consistent with the principles of normalisation and community integration. This shift in power and control from the service provider to the consumer is not occurring without some friction and confrontation (Boyle, 1988; Brown and Ringma, 1988). The Australian experience reflects those of both Europe and the United States (Kelley-Laine, 1988; Zola, 1988:a; Zola, 1988:b). The changed attitudes are dramatic and call for a basic change in the relationship of disabled people and society. As stated by Zola (1988:b), himself a physically disabled individual:

"They (recent changes) call for an end to our reliance on private goodwill and public charity. They call instead for a recognition of society's responsibilities and our own civil rights" (p.23).

Zola discusses the birth of what he refers to as the Independent Living Movement which is attempting to overcome the "sovereignty of the professional" (p. 23.) in the provision of services for disabled people and put the locus of control back in the hands of the disabled individuals.

Client participation is worthy as a goal but difficult to achieve. The accusation of subjectivity in decision making has often been used to undermine the active participation of the consumer (Bush and Gordon, 1982). It could well be argued,
however, that all participants may be seen to have a particular bias, as relinquishing power is somewhat of a threat to those who once had total control. It has often been convenient for professionals to use terms such as "denial" and "lack of co-operation" to describe attempts by clients to become involved in decision making. The balance of power has traditionally been heavily weighted in favour of the professional.

Several recent initiatives have resulted in the development of evaluation instruments which facilitate the meaningful participation of clients in the administration, management and delivery of services (Boyle, 1988; Brown and Ringma, 1988). While there has been some success achieved in changing the respective roles of physically disabled individuals and their service providers, intellectually disabled people face a greater challenge in overcoming the paternalistic and often intrusive nature of the "help" they have been offered.

Adult status implies being recognised as an adult citizen with all the associated rights, responsibilities and privileges. For persons with some intellectual disability, adult status may not be taken for granted. In the past, many rights were taken from those mentally disabled people, including rights to employment, housing, property ownership, marriage and child raising. The N.S.W. Anti-Discrimination Act (1977)\(^1\) has rectified in theory many of these inequalities; however in practice, such rights are often denied.

The problem remains complex. To provide opportunities for intellectually disabled people to be given power is not enough. The notion of power has integral to it the implication that empowerment does not exist until the individual actively takes power. It

\(^1\) The Anti-Discrimination Act of 1977 promoted equality and equal treatment of all human beings and made it unlawful to discriminate against any handicapped person in the areas of employment, education, provision of goods and services, accommodation and registered clubs.
is on this latter point that resentments rise and barriers are built by the traditional protectors of disabled people.

The foregoing review of relevant literature supports the proposition that aspirations of mildly intellectually disabled adolescents and their families are not well understood in the wider community or in the bureaucracies set up to help them. Policies that are intended to be constructive do not necessarily appear to have enhanced the prospects of empowerment of people with mild intellectual disabilities nor, as is evident in the literature, even assumed that this was a necessary or worthwhile aim. The research questions restated below take on a certain poignancy given this context.

Do adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities, their parents and teachers hold expectations and aspirations for independent living that society could be reasonably expected to meet? If aspirations and expectations are raised, even slightly, does society currently offer the kind of employment, accommodation and lifestyle opportunities to make these manifest? Does it make a damaging difference to adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities to have realistic expectations that lie, or are persistently forced, below the conditions to which they aspire?
Chapter 3

Methodology
Chapter 3

Methodology

In this chapter, a justification of the research method adopted is followed by details of the present study's design. Reviews of the sampling procedures, interview schedule construction, data collection, data recording and the methods of statistical analysis are followed by consideration of the limitations of this study.

3.1 The Research Approach Adopted

The approach adopted in this study may be classified as of the survey type which comes under the broader heading of descriptive research. This is used when the researcher observes and records data pertinent to the main questions, rather than controls what happens to the subjects; that is, it is concerned with the recording of facts and observations rather than the manipulation of variables as is the case in experimental research.

There has been much debate about the validity of qualitative research with some criticism that it does not have the requisite objectivity, rigour and control necessary for the accurate testing of hypotheses and the formulation of reasonable deductions (Kauffman, 1987; Swanson and Alford, 1987).

There has also been strong defence of the use of qualitative research methods and rejection of the quantitative approach as inappropriate for educational research (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Poplin, 1987; Smith; 1988). Poplin compared two articles which studied the placement of special education students - one was an example of thorough quantitative research, the other of qualitative research. She is highly critical of the
"reductionism, value-free objectivity, hypothesis generation and verifiable observation" inherent in the scientific method and presents a strong case for the use of the qualitative methods which acknowledge that subjectivity and the construction of personal meanings are an essential part of humanity.

"Human understanding cannot be reduced, quantified, separated, objectified, easily observed, or simply deduced. Understanding our own education and psychology (and hence, those of the systems within which we participate) is a matter of understanding how humans come to construct individual and collective meanings" (p 37).

This line of argument against reductionism has also been found most recently among many traditional scientists and mathematicians through the findings of chaos theory.

Although aware of the limitations of non-experimental research, the present researcher is convinced that by observing and recording as many measurable factors as possible in a particular situation, ordering and classifying them and then analysing the results, important relationships, prevailing conditions or particular trends may be identified.

In survey research, data may be collected through interviews, questionnaires, standardised tests or other means, all of which have been widely used in educational research (Verma and Beard, 1981, p.60). In many ways an interview is similar to an oral questionnaire. Although more costly and time-consuming, the interview method of data gathering has a number of advantages over the questionnaire for this study. It is possible to put the interviewee at ease and so obtain greater co-operation. Interviews allow the investigator to pursue leads that appear fruitful, to ask for elaboration of points and to clarify questions. More opportunities are available for in-depth questioning and responding personally to the interviewee. According to Skager and Weinberg (1971, p.116) an interview is the most suitable method for the assessment of personal qualities, or for obtaining subjective data in the realms of values, attitudes and
social perceptions. It is also possible to obtain additional information about the person interviewed, ranging from evidence of productive/unproductive behaviour through to attitudes about other people. Rummel (1968, p.109) and Verma and Beard (1981, p.114) highlighted these advantages of the interview over the questionnaire. The interview also serves to corroborate data obtained from other sources and discloses apparent contradictions or discrepancies among sources, advantages pointed out by Rummel (1964).

Wiles (1972, p.110) states that an additional advantage of interviews over questionnaires is one of motivation - "there seems to be a psychological reward in talking to an understanding interviewer". An interview also demonstrates that the researcher is willing to invest his or her own time in the data gathering process. In addition, the interview is useful with people who could not complete a written questionnaire, as was the case with a number of the subjects interviewed in this study.

Wiersma (1986, p. 180) proposes the interview method of data collection as most suitable for populations such as that sampled in this research, which includes people with poor literacy skills who may not have the motivation to complete a questionnaire even if the items are written in an understandable manner. There should be no missing or unusable data, as occurs when a questionnaire is incorrectly completed or is misunderstood. The interview also allows for the observation of signs of evasiveness and non-co-operation and can lead to significant insights in unexpected directions.

Some of the interviews had to be conducted by telephone. Sudman (1981, as cited in Wiersma, 1986, p. 185) found that co-operation rates are about the same for telephone and face-to-face interviews with the telephone being more effective in locating hard-to-reach respondents. Groves and Kahn (1979) found that on some occasions respondents did not put as much effort into the task when interviewed by telephone instead of face-to-face. This was indicated by a greater percentage of "don't know" responses over the
telephone and by the generally shorter responses to open-ended questions in the telephone interview. As there was little option in the cases of three of the interviews in this study, the attendant risks had to be accepted.

Both the strengths and the weaknesses of the interview method of research lie in its dependence upon the establishment of rapport between the interviewer and the interviewee (Skager and Weinberg, 1971, p.116). It must be recognised that an interview may be influenced by the emotional "set" of the interviewee - by self-interest, a desire to appear to good advantage, to either please or antagonise the interviewer. "Much depends on the rapport the interviewer is able to establish, her sensitivity to the interviewee's feelings and ability to avoid remarks likely to arouse anxiety or to embarrass the interviewee" (Vema and Beard, p.114). There may be greater risks of subjectivity and bias when using the interview rather than the questionnaire technique. There is a danger that the interviewer will project his or her own personality into the situation and thus influence the results. The very presence of the interviewer may affect the responses given. Despite these limitations, it was felt that the interview offered substantial advantages over the questionnaire for this piece of research.

According to a number of writers, interviews may be either structured or unstructured (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982; Cohen and Manion, 1985; Mouly, 1963; Verma and Beard, 1981). The structured interview is highly organised, with wording and sequencing of questions planned in advance. The interviewer is allowed little freedom to modify, for in the interests of consistency, no deviations from the standardised procedures are permitted. The unstructured interview allows for greater freedom and flexibility. Bogdan and Biklen note (p. 136) that not all respondents are equally articulate or perceptive - many need encouragement to elaborate. The unstructured interview offers the opportunity to respond more appropriately to individual circumstances. For all of these reasons, the unstructured interview was chosen for this research.
Cohen and Manion (1985) also include a further dimension beyond that of structure - the non-directive as opposed to the focused interview. The non-directive interview is characterised by minimal direction from the interviewer and the encouragement of spontaneous and detailed input from the interviewee. In a focused interview, attention is directed towards a situation which has been previously analysed by the researcher in order to support or reject previously formulated hypotheses. Because there were specific areas of interest to the researcher, the focused interview was more appropriate for the present study.

To summarise, a focused interview of limited structure was used in this study. This was deemed most suitable because of the difficulties some respondents would have had completing a questionnaire, because of the personal nature of the subject matter, and because of the need to explore the reasons for responses. Face to face interviews were used whenever possible, although on three occasions telephone interviews were necessary.

3.2 The Interview Technique used in this Research

Oakley (1981) examined methodological problems in traditional interview techniques after she found them impossible to adhere to throughout her own research. The present researcher found many similar problems. Rummel's (1964; p. 99) definition of an interview as a non-reciprocal relationship that should result in a one-way transfer of information, yet which necessitates the building of a high level of rapport appears contradictory. Rapport does not develop without the sharing of ideas and feelings. Merely commenting about the weather, as prospective interviewers are sometimes encouraged to do in order to put the interviewee at ease, when combined with the added warning of "not becoming too friendly" can hardly stimulate genuine rapport.

The present researcher experienced some ethical difficulties with the prospect of asking interviewees to share their innermost feelings in such a contrived way, particularly
when the issues under discussion were so important to both the subjects and the interviewer. The lives of children, adult hopes for them and concerns for their future happiness come from the very core of the being, whether one is interviewee or interviewer. It would be manipulative and intrusive to construct artificially a framework for invading that personal territory, if, indeed, it were possible to do so.

When interviewees asked questions about the researcher's children, honest answers were given and mutual concerns identified. Rather than contaminating the data, this served to establish genuine rapport and was clearly productive of some honest responses. The depth of emotion evident in many of the interviews supports this interpretation. In many ways this research resembles clinical methodology. The intensive nature of the interviews ensured that factors relating to the whole individual and how he or she relates to the environment were considered, rather than only predetermined variables. It was apparent that many of the parent interviewees had experienced few opportunities to express their concerns and hopes for their children in a non-threatening environment to an empathetic listener. Although the researcher was able to gain valuable information and insight, it is likely that the interviewees also gained from the experience.

3.3 Selection of Subjects

Thirty male and thirty female students from seven of the ten secondary schools in the South Coast Education Region with IM classes were selected. Selection of students depended necessarily on the willingness of the school principals to be involved. Two of the nine principals approached displayed some hesitancy and so subjects were not selected from those schools. One school was not approached at all as the IM class had no female members.

Although there was no a priori basis for believing that gender was an issue of great importance, equal numbers of male and female students were chosen. Most social
scientific research does assume that gender will be a key distinguishing independent variable, however, where intellectual disability is the principle variable, gender differences, such as they might be, are typically not dominant. Nevertheless, the likelihood of gender emerging as an issue had to be countenanced.

Because of the unequal distribution of males and females throughout the seven classes, as many girls as possible were invited to participate (i.e., given letters to parents for permission to interview) and then an equal number of boys was randomly selected and invited to participate. This method still did not result in equal numbers of male and female students at each school, as there was some difficulty in carrying out a number of the interviews. In five cases, although written permission was received to interview, numerous interview appointments were not kept by parents. In three of those instances, telephone interviews were eventually done. In the other two cases, the parent interviews could not be done, therefore the corresponding student and teacher interviews were not included in the study. In two other cases, students were removed to foster homes at short notice and further contact was difficult to maintain.

3.4 The Research Instrument

The interview, as stated previously, was focused but unstructured. The questions were devised after a great deal of professional and personal contact with secondary students in IM classes, their parents and teachers over a period of some years. Preliminary discussions with teachers in the field of intellectual impairment and examination of current literature in the field also assisted in the identification of areas for investigation. Normal biographical questions were included. Further questions centred on the aspirations and expectations that the students, their primary caregivers and their teachers had for them concerning their future levels of independent functioning in the community. Areas of primary investigation were future residential circumstances, marital status, vocational interests, use of transport, living skills, leisure activities,
community involvement, social relationships and support networks, and methods of personal problem solving.

The interview schedule needed to allow for open-ended responses and be flexible enough for the collection of data on unexpected dimensions of the topic. It also needed to allow for widely varying levels of language comprehension. Examples of the focus questions asked are included as Appendix I. The instrument was pilot tested using practising IM teachers and an educational psychologist. As the interview schedule allowed for considerable flexibility, no major revisions were necessary.

In addition to the interviews, a survey was made of the particular facilities available for people with mild intellectual disabilities in the Illawarra and South Coast areas. Contact was made with all state and federally funded organisations that could be included in these classifications. Various other community and private facilities were included as they became known throughout the course of the study.

3.5 Instrument Reliability

The length of the interviews enabled the researcher to ask questions in a variety of ways and thus check the consistency of the answers before the data were coded for analysis. Inconsistencies were probed in order to determine whether a question had been misunderstood or whether other reasons existed.

Time was spent with students prior to the interviews to increase the chances of a comfortable interview. Informal interaction in the classroom and playground offered opportunities for the interviewer to become known to the students and thus establish some rapport with them. Both researcher and class teacher explained the purpose of the study to the students and impressed upon them the value that was placed on their views.
3.6 Instrument Validity

The interview allowed for further explanation of misunderstood questions and probing of incomplete responses. The level of emotion expressed by numerous respondents would indicate that genuine feelings were being tapped and honest responses made.

3.7 Procedures

A research proposal including the areas of major investigation was submitted to the N.S.W. Department of Education and approval granted (see Appendix II). The principals of the nominated secondary schools were then contacted by letter (see Appendix III). The I.M. teachers at those schools whose principals approved the study were then approached. Detailed information on the study was given as requested. All class teachers approached were enthusiastic about being involved.

Letters explaining the study and requesting approval to interview students and parents were sent home (See Appendix IV). The class teachers assisted in the construction of these letters in an attempt to facilitate understanding of the project. In some cases, the teacher added some endorsing comments to increase the likelihood of parental cooperation. In addition, a number of the teachers arranged a morning tea at the school where the parents could meet the researcher in an informal setting. The wisdom of facilitating contact with interviewees through the use of recommendations from credible authorities has been widely recognised. Detailed argument is offered by Rummel (1964, p.102). The assistance of the teachers resulted in a high level of co-operation from the parents at those particular schools. After an explanation of the study was given with the assistance of the class teacher, students whose parents agreed to participate were then asked if they wanted to be involved.

All student interviews were conducted at the respective schools. In most cases, interviews took place during lesson time. It had been suggested that students would be reluctant to spend their free time being interviewed, but this doubt proved unfounded.
Interviews were conducted during recess and lunch breaks in a small number of cases when the student requested this. The average length of student interviews was 30 minutes. Some time was spent in the classroom prior to the actual interviews and in more informal interaction with the students to increase the students' familiarity with the researcher.

The interview included questions related to the students' perceptions of themselves as adults of about 25 years of age, so they were asked if they knew someone of approximately that age and engaged in some discussion about the life that person led. Although in some cases this may have contaminated the students' perceptions, it was deemed more important to ensure that the student understood the period of life to which reference was being made.

The majority of parent interviews took place either at their residences or at their child's school, with one being conducted at a place of work. Parents were given the option of choosing the place to reduce as far as possible any intimidation they felt. Interview times were at the parents' convenience. As informal a setting as possible was chosen for the school interviews, with comfortable seating and refreshments being made available. It was stressed that their opinions were genuinely being canvassed. Every effort was made to ensure that the language used was understood and that the parents realised that their contribution was valued. Parent interviews ranged in length from twenty minutes to approximately four hours, the average length being one hour. In three cases, interviews were done by telephone after numerous attempts to arrange face-to-face interviews had failed.

Teacher interviews were conducted in all cases at their schools during free periods or breaks. The purpose of the research was discussed in detail and the importance of their contribution stressed. Each teacher was interviewed about a number of students,
depending on the number of sample subjects in each class. The average length of teacher interviews was 45 minutes for each student discussed.

3.8 Data Collection and Recording

The possibility of tape recording was considered desirable for a process that was to take several months. It became apparent to the researcher, however, that the presence of the recorder was inhibiting some of the earlier interviewees, particularly the parents, although all had agreed to being recorded. It was decided, therefore, to rely primarily on the written notes. Answers to the focus questions were recorded and as much additional material collected as could be included. Actual words used by the interviewees were recorded wherever possible. A unique form of shorthand was developed by the interviewer as the research progressed which meant that a great deal of information could be recorded quickly. After each interview, the cryptic notes were expanded to form detailed fieldnotes. Additional information gleaned from the interview, impressions formed from the surroundings, and so on were also recorded.

On a number of occasions parents broke down as they disclosed sensitive information or revealed deeply felt concerns. It was obviously inappropriate to take notes during those times. No effort was made to record further information during those interviews. As soon as possible afterwards any relevant information was noted in detail.

Bogdan and Biklen (1982) acknowledge that both the descriptive and reflective types of fieldnotes can provide a rich pool of data. Portraits of subjects, reconstruction of dialogue, descriptions of settings, accounts of particular events, depiction of activities, along with observer's reflections on own behaviour, on method, on ethical dilemmas and on points of clarification, result in data worthy of examination (p.88).

As the research progressed, it became obvious that many additional variables not previously considered were noteworthy because of their repeated occurrence. For
example, the level of environmental noise in many of the homes was of surprising intensity. The identification of intellectual impairment in other members of students' families, the deprivation apparent in a number of the homes, additional physical and emotional disabilities in the students, evidence of obesity and other indicators of poor health in the students or their immediate families occurred so frequently that these factors were obviously worthy of investigation. Assessment of these variables could not be highly sophisticated, however brief notes were made of the extent to which these factors appeared.

The following example illustrates the way in which this was done. A number of the students and parents exhibited mannerisms consistent with poor self esteem; for example, bowed head, extremely quiet voice, little eye contact and depressed or apathetic responses. It was decided to make some assessment of this characteristic, using a simple three-point scale, to record whether or not the interviewee appeared to have a low, average or high level of self esteem.

In many cases the assessment was made relatively easily, such was the overwhelming nature of the evidence. In other cases, consideration of a great deal of evidence was necessary before the rating could be made. In the case of Mrs F., for example, the original rating was recorded as being average. Mrs F. maintained good eye contact, spoke confidently, exhibited no nervous mannerisms and seemed perfectly at ease when talking to the interviewer. The hostility and rejection that she displayed towards her intellectually disabled daughter, however, could well be identified as displacement of the disappointment and anger she felt towards herself for producing "a child like that". After careful examination of the interview transcript and observation of interactions between the two, it was decided to rate her self esteem as being low. A great deal of "fine tuning" of this sort occurred before any statistical analysis of the data was done. This strategy meant improved data without the risk of data "rigging".
All interviews were conducted by the researcher in order to maintain as much consistency as possible.

3.9 Data Processing and Statistical Analysis

Field notes were examined carefully and the responses to the questions of primary concern coded. Additional information was also coded and stored on disk. "Statview 512+" was the statistical package utilised in the analysis of these data. Correlation coefficients were the statistical procedures used.

3.10 Limitations

While the use of a single interviewer maintains consistency, it could also result in consistent bias. While efforts were made to triangulate the data by using information from a number of sources, it must be acknowledged that interviewer bias is possible in this piece of research.

The fact that interviews were not audio- or videotaped means that not all information given was noted. It should be recognised, however, that even the videotaping of interviews may fail to capture much of the important incidental and ambient information evident in an interview situation. This was recognised by Bogdan and Biklan (1982):

"The tape-recorder misses the sights, the smells, the impressions and the extra remarks said before and after the interview. Fieldnotes can provide any study with a personal log that helps the researcher keep track of the development of the project, to visualise how the research plan has been affected by the data collected, and to remain self-conscious of how he or she has been influenced by the data" (p. 74).

There were very real limitations in the selection of subjects. Because the study required approval by the Department of Education, school principals, class teachers, parents and students, there were opportunities for restriction of the sample at numerous levels.
Language difficulties meant that a number of parents in one area of high ethnic population were not even invited to participate. The sample of teachers is particularly small because all students came from only ten classes in seven different schools.

It must be acknowledged that young adolescents, even those with no intellectual impairment, may have difficulty perceiving themselves ten years into the future. Indeed many adults would find this difficult. It should also be acknowledged, however, that most adolescents do refer to plans, albeit nebulous, for when they are "grown up", and that these plans may give us important insights into how they perceive themselves and their place in the world.

There are obvious inadequacies in three point scales for such variables as self esteem, the impact of labelling on a student, environmental noise, level of additional disabilities, physical health, involvement in sport and emotional health of the home environment. There did appear, however, to be some advantages in a sample of this size, in assessing these variables even as crudely as that because of the possible broad trends or relationships that may be identified.

Research of this kind is fraught with methodological difficulties. One could easily be overwhelmed by the very real obstacles present and thus dissuaded from attempting research in this important area. That course, however, would exclude the collection of a rich source of data which is most worthy of examination.

3.11 Summary

In this chapter, the research approach and design were discussed, followed by details of how the sample of subjects were selected and the interview questions developed. There was some discussion of the procedures followed in data collection, recording and analysis. Finally the limitations of the study were acknowledged.
Chapter 4

Services Available to People with Mild Intellectual Disabilities in the South Coast and Illawarra Region
Chapter 4

Services Available to People with Mild Intellectual Disabilities in the South Coast and Illawarra Region

People with intellectual disabilities in the Illawara and south coast regions have access to state-wide and national initiatives, thus reference is also made to those facilities.

4.1 The Council for Intellectual Disability (C.I.D.)
The Council for Intellectual Disability is a statewide advocacy body which provides some direct services and advocates for the provision of other services. Its membership consists of professional societies, parent organisations, individual and associate members. C.I.D. members contributed to the formulation of the disability services legislation. Various working parties examine a variety of issues affecting people with intellectual disabilities and lobby members of government on local, state and federal levels. No specific initiatives in the Illawarra region were identified.

4.2 Disabled Peoples International (D.P.I.)
Funded by the Department of Industrial Relations and Employment, Disabled Peoples International aims to enhance employment opportunities for people with disabilities in Government Departments and public authorities. Using a case study approach, D.P.I. identifies the strengths of disabled people as well as those areas requiring development, and facilitates training or access to jobs through local agencies such as C.E.S., T.A.F.E. and private training institutions. D.P.I. also "markets" people with disabilities to employers, initially through local councils, private sector employers, community agencies, statutory authorities and public sector employers with a stated
interest in E.E.O. issues. As was the case with the C.I.D., no particular initiatives by this group appear to be operating in the Illawarra region.

4.3 The Commonwealth Employment Service (C.E.S.)
If individuals are registered with the C.E.S. as disadvantaged clients, they have access to the Employment Counsellor (available five days per week in the Illawarra area) and/or the Special Placement Officer (available one day per week in the Illawarra area). Through these officers, intellectually impaired people may gain access to several different types of training courses run through Skillshare, the Wollongong City Mission, the Wollongong Youth Resource Centre and the Adult Migrant Education Service.

The courses may run for six hours a day, five days a week for four, eight or twelve weeks and are available free for people on unemployment benefits or an invalid pension. A Formal Training Allowance of $20-$30 may apply to cover the cost of fares and so on. The courses are aimed at job preparation and may include mock interviews, job searching, and so on. Clients may also be referred to other vocational services available throughout the district such as Essential Personnel, the Flagstaff Group or sheltered employment situations.

4.4 The Illawarra Disabled Persons' Trust (I.D.P.T.)
This trust is a community organisation with a flexible charter that enables it to respond to changing community needs. It is funded from a variety of sources. At the state level it is funded by Family and Community Services and at the federal level by the Department of Community Services and Health. Some local funding is made through the Illawarra Area Health Assistance Scheme distributed by the Wollongong City Council.
An Education Sub-Committee has been formed to lobby for changes to be made to the Australian Traineeship System which would allow for greater access of intellectually disabled people to such courses. The I.D.P.T. supports a Community Living Support Program which provides living skills training, financial management assistance and other guidance which is aimed at increasing the chances of successful independent living for people with intellectual disabilities. A Sport and Recreational Officer also arranges involvement of intellectually disabled people in a wide range of sporting and recreational activities.

4.5 "Essential Personnel"

Established in 1986 and funded by the Department of Community Services and Health as a direct outcome of the passage of the Disabilities Services Act, this autonomous group actively seeks suitable open employment which pays award wages for people with intellectual disabilities. In some cases, the employer may receive payment under the CES Jobstart program and may be eligible for up to $2000 towards the cost of workplace modifications.

Intellectually disabled people may be referred from the C.E.S., school or community agencies with whom they have had contact. Registration involves an assessment which analyses their literacy, numeracy and other job-related skills, interests, background and any other relevant information. An attempt is made to match the client with a suitable position. Some active lobbying for positions occurs, although Essential Personnel is also registered with other job placement agencies. Once contact is made with the employer, a trainer from Essential Personnel visits the workplace to discuss the requirements of the position and to carry out a task analysis. This enables appropriate training of the prospective worker to take place. The worker commences with full on-site training. Up to 400 hours of on-the-job training and support is provided by a qualified trainer.
4.6 T.A.F.E. Courses

A range of courses is available at T.A.F.E. Colleges for the intellectually disabled population, although recent administrative and organisational changes have flagged changes which may reduce the impact of them.

In addition to Basic Education courses in literacy and numeracy which may be of benefit to this group, Counsellors for Students with Intellectual Disabilities provide a range of specialised courses through the Disabilities Unit attached to regional Colleges. Transition courses provide vocational training in skills needed for specific jobs and may be tailored to meet individual needs. The literacy and numeracy requirements of most certificate level T.A.F.E. courses are too great for this population. The pre-vocational courses are aimed at students who have left school and are linked to information from the Commonwealth Employment Service about job availability. In addition, Vocational Enhancement courses in such areas as fitting, machining and welding are used to upskill workers already in supported employment settings. Other courses in living skills such as Basic Cookery, Community Access, Legal Rights and Responsibilities and Learner's Permit Theory provide opportunities for disabled people to continue their education in an appropriate post-school setting.

4.7 The Flagstaff Group

The Flagstaff Group offers a supported employment environment for people with intellectual and physical disabilities in the Illawarra area. For employees, job skill training through on-the-job instruction and external T.A.F.E. training aims at the provision of a wide variety of tasks in a safe working environment. Worker participation in decision-making is encouraged and employees are represented on organisation and planning committees.
Although a registered charity, the Flagstaff Group functions without the need for fundraising by operating competitively in the open marketplace. By providing competitively priced products of equal quality, the Flagstaff Group has developed a broadly based business which is able to offer an increasing range of career opportunities for its staff and increasingly diverse services for its customers. Light engineering capabilities include metal and wood turning, general machining and metal pressing. The Group also provides and repairs canvas products, manufactures decorator products, provides archive document storage, a micrographic service, a fax service and business card and catering services.

4.8 Illawarra Citizen Advocacy

Illawarra Citizen Advocacy is a voluntary community movement which encourages the building of friendships between community members and people with intellectual disabilities. This has been designed to change discriminatory attitudes and broaden the experiences of all the people involved. Co-ordinators meet prospective advocates and match them with intellectually disabled partners on the basis of shared interests and locality. There are no prescribed interactions- shared activities may include going to sporting events, movies, and so on. The advocate can provide an important link to the community and a guide to community activities and resources. If necessary, the advocate may assist a person to become more independent through the use of such facilities as public transport, and may act as a spokesperson until he or she has the confidence to do so alone.

The stated aim of the Citizen Advocacy movement is to demonstrate to the community that people with intellectual disabilities have equal rights to the respect and dignity afforded other members of the community.
4.9 Crossroads

Crossroads is an Australia-wide interdenominational group which is very active in the Illawarra region. Although it is used more by the severely disabled group, some mildly intellectually disabled people participate in the monthly social activities and the annual interstate holiday organised by member churches of this group.

4.10 Neighbourhood Centres

In the Wollongong area, six Neighbourhood Centres operate for varying periods per week. Funded by local council, they offer recreational activities to a range of community members including people with intellectual disabilities.

4.11 Conclusion

It would appear that a range of services is available for people with mild intellectual disabilities in the Illawarra region. An important point is that the present researcher had some difficulty identifying and locating some of these facilities. It is not surprising that so many of the people for whom these services operate are unaware of their existence.
Chapter 5

FINDINGS
Chapter 5

FINDINGS

This report does not attempt to comment on all the data collected in the study. In follow-up work for publication, findings not reported here will be utilised.

5.1 Statistical Summary of Findings

5.1.1 Correlation Between Students' Anticipated and Preferred Financial Management as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Covariance:</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This perfect correlation suggests that all student sample members believe that their expectations of managing money will be realised. Twenty six students believed that they would be completely independent in the area of financial management; twenty two believed they would require and receive minimal or short term help while eleven believed that they would require and receive long-term assistance.

5.1.2 Correlation Between Students' Anticipated and Preferred Independent Living Skills as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Correlation:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.206</td>
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<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All students believed that their desired level of independent living would be achieved. Forty eight (80%) believed that they would be completely independent.
5.1.3 Correlation Between Students' Anticipated and Preferred Use of Public Transport as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Covariance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.491</td>
<td>.968</td>
<td>.936</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The very high correlation of .968 reflects the belief of most students' that their expected levels of independence in this area will be achieved.

5.1.4 Correlation Between Students' Anticipated and Preferred Social Circle as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>.494</td>
<td>.938</td>
<td>.881</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1 case deleted with missing values.

The correlation of .938 shows that most students believe they will have their desired social circle as adults. The size of the desired social circle varied, with eighteen believing they will have an extended social circle and thirty four believing it will be mainly family and a few close friends. One student could not be persuaded to answer this question (see count = 59).

5.1.5 Correlation Between Students' Anticipated and Preferred Support Networks as Adults

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Correlation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>2.474</td>
<td>.988</td>
<td>.976</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The correlation coefficient between these two variables was positive and almost perfect. Students believe their desired support network will be in place. Thirty six (60%) of the students believed that one or both parents would be the basis of this support.

5.1.6 Correlation Between Students' Anticipated and Preferred Leisure Experiences as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Covariance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.997</td>
<td>.983</td>
<td>.967</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high correlation of .983 reveals that a very high proportion of the students believe that they will take part in desired leisure activities. Only ten (less than 17%) mentioned the use of community facilities or sporting clubs apart from hotels.

5.1.7 Correlation Between Students' Anticipated and Preferred Holiday Experiences as Adults

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Count</th>
<th>Covariance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>1.726</td>
<td>.963</td>
<td>.927</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation of .963 reflects the conviction on the part of most students that they will have their desired holiday experiences. While for twenty two students (nearly 37%) this was expressed as "going down the coast" or something similar, fourteen students (about 23%) expected to travel widely.
5.1.8 Correlation between Students' Expected and Preferred Occupation as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count:</th>
<th>Covariance:</th>
<th>Correlation:</th>
<th>R-squared:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>.29</td>
<td>.88</td>
<td>.774</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 2 cases deleted with missing values.

The correlation coefficient of .88 between the students' expected and preferred occupation is an important indicator of a widespread belief among the students that they will be able to work in an occupation of their choice.

5.1.9 Factors Likely to Improve Students' Life Chances - Students' Opinions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar:</th>
<th>Element:</th>
<th>Count:</th>
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<tr>
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<td>A</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.509</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.754</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.018</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>77.193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.018</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A - Increased Individual Effort  
B - Curriculum Change  
C - Change in Community Attitude  
D - Provision of a Particular Service  
E - Assistance with Trade Courses at Colleges of TAFE  
F - Nothing Need Change  
G - Nothing Will Change (Apathetic Response)
Over 77% of the students (44) felt that no changes were necessary to improve their life chances. Four students believed assistance with trade courses would improve their chances and four believed that nothing would ever change.

5.1.10 Assessment of Students' Present Self Esteem

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Bar:</th>
<th>Element:</th>
<th>Count:</th>
<th>Percent:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>61.667</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A - Low Self-Esteem  
B - Average Self-Esteem  
C - High Self-Esteem  

Thirty seven or almost 62% of the students were assessed as having low self-esteem. Fifteen of the students were assessed as having average levels while only eight students were considered to have above average levels of self-esteem.

5.1.11 Correlation between Students' Self-Esteem and Impact of the Label

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>.419</td>
<td>.704</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: 6 cases deleted with missing values.

The correlation coefficient of .704 suggests a moderately strong relationship between these two variables. The impact of the label was assessed by the researcher after consideration of the number of times parents, teacher or the student mentioned teasing, name-calling or other negative outcomes of special class placement and the effect of
these on the student. Because of conflicting evidence from different sources of information, no assessment of the impact of the label was made for six students.

5.1.12 Numbers of Students Involved in Academic Integration

![Bar chart showing distribution of students across academic integration levels.]

**Key:**
- A - No Academic Integration
- B - 4 or Fewer Periods of Integration Per Week
- C - More than 4 Periods of Integration Per Week

Five of the students were integrated into regular classes for four or fewer periods per week. Two only were integrated for more than four periods per week. Fifty three students experienced no academic integration, although six of the ten classes were taught as a class by regular teachers for at least four periods per week.

5.1.13 Correlation Between Parents' Anticipated and Preferred Financial Management of the Students as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Covariance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.831</td>
<td>.962</td>
<td>.926</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This high correlation co-efficient (.962) reflects the belief of most parents that the students will gain their desired levels of independence in financial management as adults.

5.1.14 Correlation Between Parents' Anticipated and Preferred Independent Living Skills of Students as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Covariance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.248</td>
<td>.882</td>
<td>.777</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation coefficient of .882 suggests that most parents are confident that their children will achieve the desired levels of independent living skills. Forty one (approximately 68%) of the parents both wanted and expected that their children would be completely independent in this area.

5.1.15 Correlation Between Parents' Anticipated and Preferred Use of Public Transport by Students as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Covariance</th>
<th>Correlation</th>
<th>R-squared</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.499</td>
<td>.954</td>
<td>.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation of .954 reflects that most parents believe that their children will achieve the desired levels of independence in the use of public transport. Thirty eight of the parents (over 63%) believed that their children would be able to travel successfully to unknown destinations as adults.
5.1.16 Correlation Between Parents' Anticipated and Preferred Social Circle for Students as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count:</th>
<th>Covariance:</th>
<th>Correlation:</th>
<th>R-squared:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.904</td>
<td>.851</td>
<td>.724</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation coefficient of .851 suggests a strong relationship between the two variables; that is, most parents believe their children will have the desired social circle as adults.

5.1.17 Correlation Between Parents' Anticipated and Preferred Leisure Activities of Students as Adults

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Covariance:</th>
<th>Correlation:</th>
<th>R-squared:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>1.033</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.884</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A correlation of .94 suggests that most parents believe that the students will participate in the desired leisure activities.

5.1.18 Correlation Between Parents' Anticipated and Preferred Holiday Experiences of the Students as Adults

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Count:</th>
<th>Covariance:</th>
<th>Correlation:</th>
<th>R-squared:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>.996</td>
<td>.803</td>
<td>.645</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A correlation coefficient of .803 suggests a strong relationship between the two variables, reflecting the parents' belief that the students will probably achieve the holiday experiences they would like them to have.
5.1.19 Correlation Between the Parents' Anticipated and Preferred Occupation of Students as Adults.

<table>
<thead>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>1.366</td>
<td>.657</td>
<td>.432</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A correlation co-efficient of .657 suggests some relationship between these two variables, however the relationship is not as strong as it is between most other variables. This suggests that some parents perceive certain obstacles to the successful achievement of the desired occupation for their children.

5.1.20 Assessment of Parents' Self-Esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>46.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A - Low Self-Esteem  
B - Average Self Esteem  
C - High Self Esteem  

Twenty nine of the primary caregivers were considered to have low levels of self-esteem, while 28 were assessed as having average levels. Only three of the parents were assessed as having high levels of self-esteem.
5.1.21 Factors Likely to Improve Students' Life Chances - Parents' Opinions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A - Increased Individual Effort</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B - Curriculum Change</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>18.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C - Change in Community Attitude</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>48.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D - Provision of Particular Service</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>E - Assistance with Trade Courses at Colleges of T.A.F.E.</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F - No Changes Required</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>13.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>G - Nothing Will Ever Change (Apathetic Response)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A - Increased Individual Effort  
B - Curriculum Change  
C - Change in Community Attitude  
D - Provision of Particular Service  
E - Assistance with Trade Courses at Colleges of T.A.F.E.  
F - No Changes Required  
G - Nothing Will Ever Change (Apathetic Response)

Over 48% of the parents believed that the variable most likely to improve their children's life chances was a change in community attitude. About 18% believed that some curriculum change would assist their children as adults. About 13% believed no changes were necessary.
5.1.22 Teachers' Concerns

Key  
A - Administrative Problems at School Level  
B - Isolation  
C - Age Range of Students  
D - Post School Support of Students  
E - Family Background of Students

All teachers in the sample (10) expressed concern about some aspect of the administration of their classes. Class size, lack of executive support and timetabling difficulties were the particular causes of their dissatisfaction. The family background of some of their students and their poor post-school options were also concerns of all ten teachers. Feelings of separation from their regular teaching peers were expressed by eight of the teachers. Six of the teachers reported difficulties arising from the age range of the students.
5.1.23 Age Range of Student Sample

The graph reveals an unequal distribution of ages in the IM classes. Thirty seven of the students were aged either thirteen or fourteen. Only eight students were aged sixteen or seventeen.

Key:  
A - 13 years  
B - 14 years  
C - 15 years  
D - 16 years  
E - 17 years
5.1.24 Factors Likely to Improve Students' Life Chances - Teachers' Opinions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A - Increased Individual Effort</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B - Curriculum Change</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C - Change in Community Attitude</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D - Provision of Particular Service</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>31.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>E - Assistance with Trade Course at Colleges of T.A.F.E</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>6.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F - No Changes Required</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>28.333</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>G - Nothing Will Ever Change</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A - Increased Individual Effort
B - Curriculum Change
C - Change in Community Attitude
D - Provision of Particular Service
E - Assistance with Trade Course at Colleges of T.A.F.E
F - No Changes Required
G - Nothing Will Ever Change

In about thirty two per cent (19) of cases, the teachers believed that the provision of a particular service was the one factor most likely to improve the students' life chances.

In over 28% of the cases, teachers believed that nothing need change to improve the students' life chances.
5.1.25 Students' Future Involvement in Sport or Exercise - Students' Opinions

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Bar:</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>23.333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A - No Anticipated Involvement  
B - Possible Involvement  
C - Definite Involvement

Fifty per cent of the student sample (30) did not anticipate being involved in any sport or exercise-related leisure activity as adults. Only 14 of the students believed they may participate in some exercise as adults while 16 were positive they would.

5.1.26 Students' Future Involvement in Sport or Exercise - Teachers' Opinions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar:</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>A</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A - No Involvement  
B - Possible Involvement  
C - Definite Involvement

Seventy five per cent (45) of the teachers believed that their students would not participate in any sport or exercise-related activity as adults.
5.1.27 Numbers of Students with Additional Disabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>58.333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A = Moderate degree of physical disability  
B = Mild degree of physical disability  
C = No additional physical disability

Nearly 42% of students suffered some additional physical disability, with over 11% of the disabilities assessed as being moderate in degree. More specifically, disabilities included chromosomal abnormalities, cerebral palsy, limb deformities, speech impediments, hearing loss and epilepsy.

5.1.28 Evidence of Poor Health in Students or Immediate Families

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<tr>
<th>Bar</th>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A = Extremely Poor Health  
B = Moderate Degree of Poor Health  
C = No Apparent Health Problems

In 15% of the sample families, there was evidence of extremely poor health, while in a further 5% there was some evidence of poor health. Conditions observed included impetigo, bronchitis, asthma, malnutrition, psoriasis, arthritis and liver disease.
5.1.29 Evidence of Obesity in Students or Immediate Families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bar:</th>
<th>Element:</th>
<th>Count:</th>
<th>Percent:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>26.667</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8.333</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Key:  
A = Obesity  
B = Overweight Tendancies Apparent  
C = Within Normal Weight Range

Levels of obesity were apparent in nearly 27% of the families with another 8% being obviously overweight. While no height/weight comparisons were made or skin fold tests conducted, obvious obesity is not difficult to detect from casual observation. At least one other person's assessment (usually the teacher's) was considered when making these assessments. It must also be remembered that not all members of the students' immediate family were met throughout the course of the research, so it is possible that a greater incidence of these factors occurred.
5.1.30 Teachers' Assessment of Students' Social Integration

Thirty four of the students were considered to have very poor social skills. Seventeen students were considered to have average social skills. In nine cases, the teachers believed the students to have above average social skills. Teacher reports and, to a lesser extent, reports from parents, students and the researcher's own observations contributed towards the assessment.
5.1.31 Assessment of Students' Home Environments

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<td>26</td>
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<td>D</td>
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<td>6.667</td>
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Key: A - Deprived  
B - Modest  
C - Comfortable  
D - Affluent

Nearly 27% of the students lived in what could be described as deprived circumstances, exemplified by poor housing, inadequate heating and unhygienic conditions. Over 43% lived in modest circumstances while approximately 30% lived in comfortable or affluent circumstances. Where the researcher did not make home visits, reports from teachers, counsellors, home liaison officers and teaching assistants were used to make the assessment.

5.1.32 Level of Environmental Noise

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<td>3</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26.316</td>
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Key: A - Extreme level of Noise  
B - Moderate level of Noise  
C - Low level of Noise

In 14 of the 36 homes visited, there was an extreme level of environmental noise. Sources of the noise varied. Often it was the result of the number of people living in the
home and the volume necessary to make oneself heard. Televisions, even in the most
deprived homes, contributed greatly. In some cases, the number of different animals
sharing the accommodation added considerably to noise levels.

5.1.33 Incidence of Intellectual Impairment in Immediate Families

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Element</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A - Evidence Available</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B - Indicators Suggesting Intellectual Impairment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C - No Evidence Available</td>
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In 27 of the families interviewed, there were reports of other immediate family
members being placed in special classes or being employed in supported employment
settings. In a further 11 cases, there was some evidence of intellectual impairment in the
parents based on such indicators as very poor communication skills, poor hygiene and
living skills. The combined total indicates that in over 62% of the sample families there
is some additional intellectual impairment.
5.1.34 Incidence of Emotional and/or Behavioural Disorders in Students

Eleven of the students had been referred to either school or private counselling services for emotional or behavioural disorders. Examples of these conditions included antisocial behaviour, aggression, enuresis, hysterical physical problems, obsessive behaviour, acute depression, drug use, soiling and petty theft.

A further eight students exhibited some behavioural disorders but they were not (yet) considered serious enough to warrant intervention by professionals other than the teacher. Examples of behaviour in this group were promiscuity, obsessive behaviour and extreme nervousness.

Key:  
A - Referred for Emotional or Behavioural Disorder  
B - Apparent Disorder but No Referral Made  
C - No Indication of Disorder
5.1.35 Emotional Health of Environment

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<td>C</td>
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Key:  
A - Poor  
B - Average  
C - High

The emotional health of 18 of the families was assessed as poor. Close scrutiny of the interview records, field notes and teacher reports revealed evidence of overprotectiveness, hostility towards family members, obsessive behaviour and acute depression, among other conditions.

5.1.36 Teachers' Assessments of Optimal Placement for Students

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<td>3</td>
<td>A</td>
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Key:  
A - IO Placement More Suitable  
B - Suitably Placed in IM class  
C - Should be Integrated

The teachers believed that eighteen of the students could have been fully integrated successfully with the appropriate support. Two of the students, in the teachers' opinions, would have been more suitably placed in a class for moderately intellectually disabled students.
### 5.1.37 Parents' Anticipated Support Network for Students as Adults

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Key:  
- **A** - One or Both Parents
- **B** - Other Relative Apart from Spouse
- **C** - Best Friend or Spouse
- **D** - Community agency
- **E** - No-one
- **F** - Anyone

Eighty per cent (48) of the parents expected that they would provide the students' major emotional support as adults. Five believed they would go to other relatives such as siblings or grandparents and five believed that they would not go to anyone with their problems.
5.1.38 Parents' Preferred Support Network for Students as Adults.

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Key:  
A - One or Both Parents  
B - Other Relative Apart from Spouse  
C - Best Friend or Spouse  
D - Community agency  
E - No-one  
F - Anyone

Over 73% (44) of the parents also preferred that they would be the students' major emotional support, although seven parents felt their children should go to other family members and six believed spouses or friends should provide the major support.
5.1.39 Teachers' Anticipated Support Network for Students as Adults

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Key:  
A - One or Both Parents  
B - Other Relative Apart from Spouse  
C - Best Friend or Spouse  
D - Community agency  
E - No-one  
F - Anyone  

In 53% of cases, the teachers expected that the students' major emotional support as adults would come from their parents while in another 12%, teachers believed other family members would be their major support.
5.1.40 Teachers' Preferred Support Network for Students as Adults.

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<td>1.667</td>
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</table>

Key:  
A - One or Both Parents  
B - Other Relative Apart from Spouse  
C - Best Friend or Spouse  
D - Community agency  
E - No-one  
F - Anyone

In over 31% (19) of the cases, teachers believed that a community agency would be the preferred support for their students as adults.
5.2 Observations on Context

The following observations provide further information which may assist the reader to place the results more firmly in their context.

5.2.1 Family Composition

Thirty one of the students lived with both natural parents, while two lived with adoptive parents. One male student lived with his paternal grandmother following his parents' divorce and abandonment by his mother. Twenty three of the students' had experienced divorce among their original parents. Nine of these parents had remarried. Six of the students lived with their natural mothers and stepfathers while three lived with their natural fathers and stepmothers. Eleven of the students lived with their single divorced mothers, four of whom were living in de facto relationships. Three students lived with their single divorced fathers. One student lived with his widowed father while another student lived with her widowed mother. Two students lived with their single mothers.

5.2.2 Feelings of Isolation - Teacher Reports

A number of the teachers made comments indicating that the regular teacher perception of them was not high. Far from being regarded as specialists, they were more often regarded as less than bona fide teachers.

"They think I teach these kids because I couldn't teach regular kids" (Teacher F:1, p. 5, 11/8/89).

"Just after I came here......the first sport afternoon, the P.E. teacher asked me if I'd be O.K. handling normal kids because everyone did sport together."(Teacher E, p. 2, 7/8/89)

"One of the casuals asked who employed me... she thought some charity employed the teachers on special classes." (Teacher F.2, p. 7, 11/8/89)

When ___(regular teacher) found out I actually got more money for teaching the IMs, he couldn't believe it. I got snide remarks from a few others, too,
when the word got around. They obviously don't know how hard it is." (Teacher A, p. 6, 9/11/89)

"Because the kids muck up on them (regular teachers) and give them a hard time, they reckon no-one would teach them unless they had to. They think this class is the pits." (Teacher E, p. 3, 7/8/89)

"The joke around here is that if you don't toe the line, the boss'll put you on the IM class....it's like the Siberian Front joke for Russian soldiers." (Teacher E, p. 3, 26/7/89)

5.2.3 "Theme" Homes

Two of the thirty six homes visited deserve particular mention because of their unique qualities. One was what could only be described as a "shrine" to Elvis Presley. The doorbell played one of his most popular songs, an oversized cardboard cutout welcomed people at the front door and all furnishings were completely dominated by "Elvis" themes - hook rugs, engraved mirrors, ashtrays, framed pictures and so on. The other home was similarly dominated by Harley Davidsons and abounded with representations of this particular American motorbike. Fifteen framed numberplates from past bikes decorated the walls. Family pictures appeared in neither home. While no conclusions can be drawn from these eccentricities and they are not necessarily evidence of disturbance, they are of interest.
Chapter 6

Discussion of Findings
6.1 Students' Perceptions of Their Future

There were consistently high correlations between the students' anticipated and preferred levels of functioning as adults throughout the range of variables relating to future financial management, living skills, use of public transport, social circle, support network, leisure and holiday experiences and occupational choice (Ref. 5.1.1 - 5.1.8). In some cases there was a perfect positive correlation. It would appear that there is little recognition by the students of the barriers that exist to the realisation of their goals. This is consistent with the students' responses to the question of how their life chances could be improved (Ref. 5.1.9). Over 77% (44) of them felt that nothing need change. Perhaps if there had been a greater recognition of the barriers, it might have been tempting to attribute the overall lack of self esteem of the student sample to this factor. One must, however, look for other explanations of the high incidence (Ref. 5.1.10) of low self-esteem.

The correlation of .704 between student self-esteem and the impact of being labelled by membership of the IM class (Ref. 5.1.11) suggests that there is some relationship between these two variables. This correlation could reflect the negative effects of the labelling process. Both teachers and, more often, parents reported disturbing incidents of victimisation of the students by their siblings, peers and, in some cases, regular teachers. Name-calling was regularly reported, as was the effect this had on the student. The researcher heard of a range of insulting and disparaging nicknames reserved for the IM students. No social or informal integration in the schools was observed by the researcher during the five months of data collection. All teachers interviewed agreed that their students were very conscious of being different, the only exceptions being two students who were very low functioning and were probably misplaced in the IM class. Many parents reported difficulties when younger siblings surpassed the academic achievements of the disabled student. This seemed to be the
point at which most students "gave up". It is hardly surprising that the self-esteem of these students is chronically low.

Both the teacher and parents of one IM student commented on her rapid personality change after a successful application for part-time work at a popular fast food outlet where many mainstream students from her school also worked. Her confidence and self-esteem had increased dramatically, perhaps evidence of losing in part her "special" label.

The partial academic integration operating in most of the schools (Ref 5.1.12) does not appear to be contributing to any integration at the social level. Because IM classes are made up of a number of feeder schools in a particular area, many of the students live outside the regular school area and so do not know the regular school population. This could heighten the sense of separation from them. The part-time nature of regular class attendance may make it difficult for the students to be viewed as bona fide members of the integrated class and so any academic benefits are outweighed by the lack of acceptance by their regular peers. Four parents whose children had been partially integrated were convinced that their children were reluctant to work as hard as they could for fear of being moved out of the IM class and losing their friends. The sense of "belonging", even to a lower status class, would be the preferred alternative to displacement and isolation.

6.2 Parents' Perceptions of the Students' Future
High levels of correlation also existed between the parents' anticipated and preferred levels of student functioning as adults over the range of variables relating to daily living and general community integration, reflecting a lack of concern in these areas (Ref. 5.1.13 - 5.1.18). There was a lower correlation, however, between the parents' anticipated and preferred student occupation (5.1.19), reflecting perhaps their realisation of the difficulties the students would have gaining employment.
Dissatisfaction with the school curriculum because of its apparent lack of relevance to future employment (Ref. 5.1.21) also suggests that this is a primary concern of the parents. Particular parental concerns relating to their children's education are discussed further in 6.4.1.

The high percentage of parents with a low self-esteem rating (5.1.20) could be related to the students' low status in the community. Knowing that your child is not regarded highly by others could reduce feelings of self-worth. The fact that over 48% of the parents suggested that the thing most likely to improve their child's life chances would be a change in community attitude (Ref 5.1.21) also supports this interpretation of the results. As one parent put it: "I want people to accept and help G... not just because it's their job, but because he's another human being." (Case 10, p.4, - 4/8/89). The expression "for people to give them a go" occurred frequently as parents discussed what their children would need as adults. One single mother who lacked the traditional family support network, said that above all else she would like for her son "a grandfather - someone with experience of the world who could give him advice and listen to his problems." (Case 12, p.2, - 3/8/89). This figure was obviously pictured as one who provided the necessary support out of love rather than duty - more a mentor than a social worker.

6.3 Administrative Issues
6.3.1 Lack of Executive Support
Analysis of the teachers' concerns (Ref. 5.1.22) reveals that there was a perceived lack of support at the executive level for IM classes, demonstrated in part by inadequate provision of resources. Analysis of the raw data revealed that the least favoured classrooms were usually allocated to the IM class. In two cases the IM rooms were quite isolated, a factor of great concern to one female IM teacher who had two violent and unpredictable students.
Because of the complexity of timetabling secondary classes, the IM classes were usually allocated last, often resulting in the inappropriate timing of lessons. One IM class had practical classes timetabled for four mornings of the week, after which students had to return to more demanding skills lessons.

In some instances, the IM class was used to support falling numbers in particular subject areas in order to maintain executive positions. This class often provided the only source of flexibility for the school. Thus, in one school, six art periods per week were timetabled for the IM group, not because this was perceived to be meeting their needs, but in order to maintain a Head Teacher in this subject department. These art periods were also to be taught by another subject specialist, further reducing their worth for this group. While recognising the inadequacies of this system, it is difficult to be critical of the school when it occurs in response to poor staffing formulae laid down by distant administrators.

The IM classes were in all cases attached theoretically to a particular faculty but operated without true executive support, as in no schools involved in the study did the designated executive have any training or experience with disabled learners. This also meant that innovations in the field and information on newly developed resources were not communicated to the class teacher effectively, if at all. Although some support was offered by consultants at the regional level, this was considered by all the teachers to be inadequate and could not replace school-based support from which all other teachers benefitted to some degree.

6.3.2 Lack of Special or Regular Teacher Support
The isolation experienced by teachers in this field was mentioned by a number of the teacher participants (Ref. 5.1.22). IM classes are not present in every school. In the region defined in the present study, ten schools had IM classes, three of those schools having two each. Thus the support most teachers are afforded from their colleagues is
not as available for this group of teachers. The strength of group cohesion is lost for teachers who are in great need of it.

A number of teachers' comments (Ref. 5.2.2) suggested that they believed their job was not considered to have the importance of other secondary teachers. In the pecking order of the secondary system, the IM teacher would appear to be at the bottom. Because many of them originally trained as primary teachers, they are not really considered to be "proper" secondary teachers. Teaching students with learning difficulties would appear to be a low status profession in the eyes of many regular teachers.

In some instances, regular teachers refused to take the class for elective subjects or individual students into their elective groups. A common complaint made by IM teachers was that regular teachers had little idea how to teach the IM class. This would certainly explain some of their reluctance to be involved in integration programs. The view was expressed by two of the IM teachers that the regular teachers were afraid of their students and had no idea how to relate to them. Difficulties with IM students in the playground were referred back to the IM teacher for solution. Thus, the IM teacher, without the support of other teachers or executive, had full practical responsibility for a group of students with more than the usual number of problems.

Lack of appropriate staff development and lack of "whole school" responsibility for the students could account for many of the administrative problems encountered. Research into the effective schools movement in the U.S.A. supports the fact that commonality of aims of all teaching staff is a contributing factor to effective schooling (Goodman, 1985; Peterson, Albert, Foxworth, Cox and Tilley, 1985).
6.3.3 Age Range of IM Students

The wide age range in the IM classes (Ref. 5.1.23) presented difficulties for some teachers who were programming for students with greatly varying social and emotional needs in addition to very diverse academic needs. The social and emotional needs of a twelve year old differ greatly from those of a sixteen year old. Personality clashes between students were commonly reported. The numbers in the classes, although significantly smaller than regular classes, still did not allow enough time for the individual needs of such a diverse group to be met.

It is an interesting point that students who, by definition, have immature cognitive competencies, are placed in classes that require greater adjustments in close peer relationships than their regular peers. It is possible that administrative convenience is being served better than the needs of the students by the present organisation of IM classes.

The ages of the students in this study, although taken from IM classes which cater for students up to 18 years, are not evenly distributed (Ref. 5.1.23). Nearly two thirds of the sixty students were aged either thirteen or fourteen. The low numbers of students aged fifteen and above suggests that many IM students leave school at the minimum age. IM classes, although theoretically catering for students up to normal school leaving age, do not go beyond Year 10. If students wish to continue after having completed that year, it is a matter of repeating year 10, possibly twice. In addition, IM students do not receive a School Certificate, a point of great concern among the parents and some of the students. The parents believe that the Statement of Attainment the students receive identifies them as having been in a special class and so handicaps them in seeking employment, despite the fact that the standard achieved may not be very different from that achieved by students in some of the lower regular streams. These would appear to be valid points of concern.
Students' responses revealed the difficulty many of them have in perceiving future events. Many said they believed they would get married, yet other responses indicated that future spouses and families were not considered. This was one among several instances where a "reality" check involving detailed working through of a response, showed need for concern by carers about a particularly confident assertion by the IM student. Future holidays, for example, were to be taken with present schoolfriends; problems would be discussed with parents rather than with spouses; they would live with "mates" or "best friends". Future recreational activities were identical to their present hobbies; for example, students said that as adults they would ride their skateboard or boogie board, play computer games, do boggleword puzzles and so on. Many assumed that in ten years time they would have the same pets. The implications inherent in future predictions did not seem to have been grasped. This could quite possibly reflect a cognitive immaturity which prevents the students from realistically perceiving the future.

This is consistent with the now widely accepted view that intellectual disability reflects delayed development rather than a qualitatively different intellect and would strongly support lengthening the period of formal education rather than shortening it. The provision of an IM class only until Year 10 discourages those students who need an extended period in which to learn from continuing their education. Thus they are disadvantaged even more in efforts to bridge the gap between their skills and those of their regular peers.

6.4. Curriculum Issues

6.4.1 Curriculum Emphasis

More of the traditional literacy and numeracy rather than a living skills oriented curriculum at school was frequently requested by the parents in response to the life chances question (Ref. 5.1.21). The lack of homework given to the IM students was perceived by the parents to be further indication of weakness in the curriculum. The
only parents who did not prefer an academic focus for the curriculum were those of very low functioning students. The assumption on the part of some parents appeared to be that a more academic curriculum would be of more assistance in ensuring future employment. There is either denial or lack of understanding that "normal" academic progress will not be achieved by their children. Failure at school is seen to be the result of the students' lack of effort or poor teaching. Comments such as:

"going down the street every day isn't going to help them get a job"; (Case 23, p. 9, 18/8/89)

"the kids need more maths and reading, not less like they're getting now"; (Case 2, p.1, 3/8/89)

"there should be more proper school work instead of cooking and walking up the street"; (Case 28, p.5, 25/8/89)

"they don't push enough learning into them" (Case 44, p.7, 20/9/89) and

"the teachers should make them try harder to do the work" (Case 49, p.6, 15/9/89)

were common and reflect the dissatisfaction with the present curriculum.

None of the teachers, however, felt that a change of curriculum was necessary (Ref. 5.1.24). It would appear that there is some disagreement between the parents and teachers about what constitutes a relevant program. The reasons for the present emphasis on living skills should be communicated to the parents. On the other hand, further consultation with the parents may reveal that valid reasons exist for some revision of the curricula.

6.4.2 Health Education

Fifty per cent of the student sample did not anticipate being involved in any sport or exercise-related leisure activity as adults (Ref.5.1.25), a disturbing result for any group of people, but perhaps even more so when considering the poor health and obesity statistics for this group (Discussed in 6.5.1). The teachers felt that an even greater
percentage of their students (Ref. 5.1.26) would not participate in any exercise-related activity as adults. Although some of the students will be employed in manual and labouring occupations which will necessitate a certain level of physical activity, this will not be the case for all students. One could predict with some confidence that many of these students will be involved in very little physical activity as adults.

Nine of the teachers mentioned the present low involvement of their students in sport. Seventeen of the students expressed an active dislike of sports because their only experience was at school where success was so limited that this competitive arena was avoided.

In only three cases did students participate in representative or high status sports either at school or in the community. Poor health and diet, little social aptitude, lack of transport facilities and money for fees and equipment and the lack of parental encouragement and modelling could all have some bearing on this poor participation rate. If school is to be their main source of sporting experiences, it is vital that these experiences be positive in order for the students to change their attitudes towards sport and exercise. Sport may be one area in which mildly intellectually disabled youth could participate without undue disadvantage if all other factors were equal. A greater emphasis on this curriculum area could do much to raise both health standards and levels of self-esteem.

6.4.3 Work Experience

There was some dissatisfaction with the work experience offered to the IM students at one school where work experience at the local sheltered employment setting was the only type offered. This could certainly have an impact on the students' aspirations. More, rather than less, work experience would seem to be appropriate for a group who already have reduced experiences and life options. Additional work experience,
properly administered, would also broaden the community's awareness of the abilities of these students and could lead to further employment opportunities for them.

6.5 The Multiplier Effect of Additional Problems
Reference to tables 5.1.27 -5.1.35 reveals the high percentages of families in this sample with additional physical, social, emotional and environmental problems and supports Brantlinger's (1988) findings. The key to understanding this section is the realisation that each additional disablement problem has a multiplicative, not an additive effect.

6.5.1 Health Issues
Nearly 42% of the students had additional physical disabilities, with 12% of these being considered at least moderate in degree (Ref. 5.1.27). In 15% of the sample there was evidence of extremely poor health in the student or in the immediate family (Ref. 5.1.28). Extreme obesity was apparent in nearly 27% of the families with another 8% being obviously overweight (Ref. 5.1.29). Apart from any other consideration, there are clear implications here for increased monetary cost to the individual families or to the Government.

6.5.2 Issues of Social Integration
The social problems experienced in general by IM students were mentioned by all teachers in this sample (Ref 5.1.30). Many of the difficulties with peers resulted from an inability to conform to normal expectations of behaviour and from their reliance on immature strategies when frustrated. Poor sportsmanship, outbursts which ruined team games, immature behaviour and lack of the required attention span to maintain interest in many adolescent pursuits regularly led to disputes with siblings and regular peers. For these reasons, attempts at regular club membership had been disastrous. Many parents reported that stronger friendships were formed with children considerably younger. Exclusion from regular peer group membership also means that these students
are particularly vulnerable to membership of gangs or other subcultures operating outside the mainstream community and/or involved in illegal activities. Taplin (1989) quoted disturbing figures on prison populations. Although only 3% of the total population may be regarded as having some intellectual impairment, 10-22% of prison populations are identified as intellectually disabled.

An *ex post facto* inspection of fieldnotes revealed that, for twenty of the families represented in this study, defacto relationships, permanent caravan dwelling, illegitimate children, illegal activity and so on were considered to be a normal part of everyday existence. While some of these factors are gaining wider acceptance, they appear still to remain outside the experiences of the most influential strata of society.

The restricted social experiences of the families became evident by parental responses to such social conventions as shaking hands. Three parents mentioned that they had never before shaken hands and others seemed equally unfamiliar with this accepted formality. This could indicate a lack of consideration or respect on the part of people with whom they had come into contact or perhaps a very different social environment. Either way, it suggests a separation from mainstream society which must militate against them in their community interactions and raise one more barrier between them and full social integration.

### 6.5.3 Issues Relating to Home Environment

Deprived circumstances existed in nearly 27% of the family homes (Ref. 5.1.31). Lack of adequate heating or protection from the elements, sparse or makeshift furnishings and the state of disrepair of some homes indicated significant poverty levels. The odours in several of the homes were difficult to ignore.

In almost 25% of the homes, the level of noise was extreme (Ref. 5.1.32) and differed greatly from what would be the accepted level in most classrooms, particularly in a
secondary school. This is further evidence of the "cultural clashes" which alienate this group of students from what are essentially middle class educational settings. School standards which differ greatly from home standards make success at school that much harder, and the students that much keener to leave.

6.5.4 Incidence of Intellectual Impairment in Family

The high incidence (Ref. 5.1.33) of intellectual impairment in other members of the students' immediate families is worthy of attention. It should be noted that this percentage is conservative as it was based only on impairment identified by placement in a special class or supported employment setting as reported incidentally by one of the subjects during the interview. Fieldnotes in many additional cases referred to the probable intellectual disability of the interviewee based on such indicators as very poor expressive skills and apparent inability to cope with normal hygiene, dress and domestic requirements. If those additional cases were to be included, the percentage would be close to 63%.

In some cases, the poor literacy skills of the parents meant that advertising material in the press or located at community facilities detailing available services was not understood, further compounding their difficulties.

Encounters with community services were reportedly often negative for this group of parents. Inability to complete forms correctly, the use of non-standard English and the lack of knowledge of certain social conventions often met with impatient if not hostile responses in government departments and other agencies. Little confidence was placed in them as a source of support for their children.

Many of the parents of this group lack power, often for the same reasons as their children do. As McLoughlin, Edge, Petroska and Strenecky (1985) contend, "the parents of exceptional children who are likely to be chosen as representative of the
parental point of view may be more similar to professionals in perception" (p. 238). Other parents certainly display dissatisfaction with available services but appear to lack the necessary social and communication skills to be effective in promoting change. The additional problems affecting so many of these families could also be a drain on the energies and time of parents who see a need to be involved but lack the physical, emotional, financial and practical resources to do so. The heterogeneous nature of the parents of exceptional children implies that they will have differing needs, depending on the nature of the child's disability, their educational background and home situation. McLoughlin et al recommend a team approach to the planning, development and evaluation of materials that will enable parents to receive current and relevant materials relating to the services available for their children.

The question of the parts played by heredity and environment is also raised by these results. If there is more than a 60% chance of intellectually disabled students having other intellectually disabled members in the family, what compounding effects may be expected? As this is a substantial scientific issue, no judgement is offered in regard to the question within the framework of this thesis, but it is obviously worthy of further investigation.

6.5.5 Emotional and Behavioural Disorders

Twelve of the students exhibited behavioural disorders severe enough to have been referred to either school or private counselling services (Ref. 5.1.34). Three of the students could be so aggressive that teachers feared they could kill under some circumstances. One thirteen year old boy had hospitalised his mother on more than one occasion.

The "emotional health" of eighteen of the family environments was assessed as poor (Ref. 5.1.35). These assessments were made after consideration of data from a number of sources. One mother, Mrs G., was obviously very caring of her sixteen year old
daughter, but many of her statements and actions demonstrated an overprotective manner which would not contribute to the growth of independence in her daughter. When questioned as to whether she would like her daughter to have children, her response was that she "would not allow" her daughter to experience that pain. (Case 24, p.3, 25/8/89). Lifetime care had already been arranged for her daughter despite the fact that she operated at the top end of the IM range academically. Not surprisingly, the daughter presented as extremely anxious and withdrawn.

Another interviewee, Mrs W. had quite unrealistic expectations of her cerebral palsied and brain damaged son and had completely alienated all community and government support services through her overpowering and unrealistic lobbying on her son's behalf. In the case of the S. family, both parents exhibited acute depression. "We've had no life since she was born" was typical of their comments (Case 48, p.7. 13/9/89). They had never taken advantage of respite care facilities and appeared overwhelmed by the responsibilities and pressures of caring full-time for their daughter for seventeen years. Mrs M. was a chronic alcoholic with all the attendant problems. Mr B. had displayed aggressive and hostile behaviour for many years towards neighbours, teachers and his family.

The extent to which these emotional problems stemmed from the pressures of having a disabled child in the family cannot be determined. The cumulative effect of these additional problems, however, must have some impact on the ability of students and parents to operate in every sphere of their lives. The degree to which the additional disadvantages have been responsible for the suppression of academic functioning must be considered, particularly when it was estimated by the teachers that eighteen of the students could have been integrated (Ref 5.1.36). Was their placement in an IM class the result of intellectual disability only or the result of a combination of factors which have acted to suppress achievement? It is likely that assessment procedures for IM class placement should be carefully scrutinised to ensure that it is indeed intellectual
disability that is being measured. If this is found not to be the case, then honesty on the part of the authorities as to the social bases of their assessment and placement policies could prove helpful even if temporarily troublesome.

These data highlight the complexity of the problems facing many of the sample families. The intricate relationships between the various factors defy simplistic analysis and serve to emphasise the overwhelming difficulties of this group. The multifactorial causes of school failure call for a multidimensional approach towards the solutions. There is obviously a place for the contributions of other professionals and paraprofessionals such as physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dieticians, social workers and so on in regular schools and not only in special schools where their contribution has long been recognised. This would call for greater co-operation and collaboration among the various government departments than currently exists.

6.6 Post-School Options and Support Services

In nineteen cases, the teachers felt that a particular service was required if their students were to achieve maximum community integration (Ref. 5.1.24). Unfortunately, the teachers believed that many of their students would not utilise access to helping agencies because it would identify them as being different. This group, they believed, feels the stigma more than the severely disabled group.

Some tertiary training in living skills was mentioned by eight of the teacher sample. The role T.A.F.E. colleges could play in this was mentioned by all of those eight teachers. Post-school T.A.F.E. courses which would prepare the students as trade assistants were mentioned regularly as an alternative to the more demanding trade courses. Difficulties with the mathematics and English components of trade courses meant that this option was rarely chosen by the students despite the fact that many expressed an interest in trade-related employment.
An interesting point is that many of the courses outlined by parents, teachers and students, (courses for trade assistants, further living skills and so on) are actually offered at T.A.F.E. colleges. There has obviously been poor or ineffective dissemination of this information into the community. Recent bans placed on the advertising of such courses will not improve matters.

Investigation of the post-school options available for this group raised some interesting points (see chapter 4). In a number of cases, the actual work done in a supported employment setting was more challenging and required many more skills than some positions in open employment. For example, a number of the IM students from past years were now employed in the open market as trolley collectors, packers or for very basic tasks on a factory floor. Other students had found employment in a supported setting where real trade skills were being used. Lathe operation, fitting and turning skills and carpentry skills were all being used by intellectually disabled young people at one centre visited. The powerful stigma associated with supported employment for some was overshadowing what appeared to be real advantages offered. The assumption appears to be that open employment of any sort is preferable to supported employment. The effects of boredom and depression are equally as devastating for workers with disabilities. Job satisfaction is as important for them as it is for any worker. Obviously a major obstacle to overcome is the poor "wage" offered in supported employment settings, which is only a supplement to the pension. On the other hand, a certain percentage of parents prefer sheltered employment with its guarantee of a continued pension because of the security it represents for their children and, in some cases, for them. The question is raised as to whether some positive discrimination by way of tax allowance for money earned beyond the pension would be a constructive and economically viable way of assisting these people to gain real wage parity.

The parents' lack of awareness of existing services was raised by five of the teachers. Most of the students qualified for the Disability Allowance through their measured I.Q.
alone and a number on more than one ground. Very few of the sample actually received it. In some cases, the existence of it was unknown; in others, the intimidating and confusing nature of the form itself meant that unless the parents received some assistance in filling it out, the task was too overwhelming.

The majority of parents both expected and preferred that they would be the students' main support as adults (see 5.1.37 - 5.1.38). The teachers, although anticipating that the parents would be the students' main support, expressed a preference for other support networks to be utilised (5.1.39 - 5.1.40). The reliance on the parents was seen as the major reason for the students' inability to break out of the intergenerational cycle of poverty. In many cases the parents were seen to have more problems than the students and few opportunities to help them. "They need someone with a few more clues" (Teacher G, p.11, 11/7/89) was how one teacher expressed his reservations. Four teachers who had been teaching IM classes for over five years mentioned that ex-students often returned to them for advice. This usually occurred regularly within the first twelve months after leaving school but often students would return several years later. The twelve-month period immediately following leaving school was the period when the difficulty of gaining employment and the lack of choice they had was made apparent. This return to the school environment reveals an obvious failure in appropriate post-school service provision for this group of students.

There was a marked difference in the teachers' expectations of students who had strong support networks behind them. In many of these cases, the parents were already planning for the involvement of their children in family businesses. There was a recognition that much of the impetus would have to come from them because of the restricted opportunities for their children. The social status of the family and the extent of network connections would appear to have far more influence on the employment prospects of the students than the educational program offered. This is surely an indictment of the equality of opportunity we are theoretically providing these students.
6.7 Importance of the Teacher

Unlike other secondary teachers, the IM teacher spends most of the day with the one class. It can be assumed, therefore, that the IM teacher has an even greater impact on the students than regular teachers may have on particular students.

It was surprising that in 17 cases the teachers suggested that nothing need change in order to improve the life chances of the students (Ref. 5.1.24), as one might expect teachers to be aware of the problems that the students would encounter. Further breakdown of the results reveals that ten of those responses came from the same teacher, whose acceptance of the students' lot in life could only be described as remarkable. This particular teacher, who had been teaching IM students at the same school for 16 years presented as being very philosophical. "Life will go on - most will survive, some won't. Nothing will change that" (Teacher B, p. 7, 4/8/89). This attitude could be interpreted as reflecting some level of burnout, particularly the "reduced personal accomplishment" that Maslach and Jackson (1984) identify as resulting from the belief that one was no longer effective in the working environment. It could also signify a fatalistic approach to life, in which there was no alternative but to accept what life handed out. If this were indeed the case, the question is raised of the effect this attitude may have on programming aims and on the students.

This teacher's stated aim was to give the students success in the classroom which would have the effect of raising their self-esteem. Consequently, long periods were spent doing basic algorithms which the students did easily and willingly. The students appeared to have a genuine affection for their teacher, however many parents of students in that class expressed dissatisfaction with the program. Greater concentration on "harder work that would help them get a job" (Case 11, p.7, 3/8/89) was the stated preference. The more relaxed approach of the teacher was interpreted as "not pushing the kids hard enough when that's what they really need". (Case 14, p.4, 3/8/89) This raises further interesting questions about the personality types of the teachers and the
effects that these may have on the disabled students and on relationships with the parents.

Other teachers in this sample were more of the zealot type - driven by ideals of equity and playing strong advocacy roles within the community on behalf of their students. Children with special educational needs may attract more extreme personality types among teachers because of the extreme nature of the needs that must be met. In one notable case, the zealot role was almost pathological in its expression. This led to conflicts with other teaching and community personnel and, ironically, reduced opportunities for the students to integrate within the school and the community through such activities as work experience.

The impact of the teacher's personality can, therefore, be great and highlights the importance of the IM teacher perhaps even more than the teacher of regular students, because IM students are, in many ways, more vulnerable.

Some teachers who find it difficult to cope with the demands of a regular classroom (or with the demands of regular life), may see the Special Education field as an escape from the "normal world" to a world where, if the child fails to learn, one can always blame the disability. Two teachers in this sample appeared to fit this description. Unsolicited comments to the researcher from other members of staff and executive reflected the poor opinion they had of these teachers. Some regular teachers said their reluctance to be involved in integration programs with the IM students was due to their unwillingness to work with these particular teachers.

This may be contrasted with the situation in school "G". A greater level of acceptance of the IM students appeared to exist at this particular school where the IM teacher had an extremely high profile and was very popular among both students and staff. His high level of involvement in sport at the school, success as the football coach,
involvement in the careers program, and gregarious and extroverted personality meant that he enjoyed considerable status with the regular school population as well as with his own class. In some way, it appeared that his students shared in his status. He certainly promoted his students whenever possible and was vigorous in his defence of them if he felt that they were being victimised. Because of the unofficial power he had in the school, he appeared to be very effective as their advocate.

There was noticeably more school involvement of his students' parents than in any other of the IM classes. An interesting measure of the confidence felt by the parents was that a greater percentage of them than from any other school opted for a school rather than home interview, and appeared considerably more at ease in the school surroundings.

If we accept that the IM teacher is extremely important in the education of these students, we must also accept that teacher selection for these classes needs a new emphasis. "Refugees" from the regular teaching force must be screened. Teachers of Special Education need to be highly skilled but also require those personal characteristics that will enable them to achieve a high profile in the school and assist the development of greater self-esteem in their students.

6.8 Gender Differences

As anticipated in the research design, gender did not appear as an issue of importance perhaps confirming the earlier assertion that even mild intellectual disability tends to be a pervasive and dominating variable. This statement is made with the reservation that the clinically based methodology of the present study might not have generated particular sensitivity to gender differences even if these did exist.
6.9 Empowerment

6.9.1 Status Sharing

It would appear that some status sharing occurs between students and teacher. In the case of a weak teacher, the low status of the disabled students is emphasised and both students and teacher suffer further reduction in status. The low status of the students is transferred to the teacher unless the teacher is of a particularly strong personality type, as was the case with school "G". When the class teacher enjoys a high and positive profile in the school, this is transferred to the class. In these instances the negative labelling effects of special class placement are minimised. Because disabled students could be described as having only marginal involvement in many mainstream activities in a school, the influence of the teacher in promoting further involvement cannot be underestimated.

Six parents mentioned that the negative labelling effect of special class placement was greatly increased in the secondary school. Their children, who had all been in the same special class at primary school, had believed that they were in an enhanced position and were, in fact, envied by some other students for their favoured treatment. This was expressed as "being treated special" (Case 44, p 8. 20/9/89) and "having the best teacher" (Case 50, p.5, 29/8/89) which supports the probability that the teacher may be critical in asserting the students' position in the school.

The sharing of status with a high profile teacher could be the start of an empowering process for these students. For most individuals, some degree of power is gained with the rights and responsibilities that accompany adulthood status. The difficulties people with intellectual disabilities have in achieving most of the indicators of adulthood have already been discussed in Chapter 2. If this shared status leads to increases in self-esteem and reductions in the negative effects of labelling, as appears to have happened at school "G", it may be easier to achieve the other essential elements. The compounding effects of low self-esteem would not be so telling. Because adolescence
is such a critical time in the lives of intellectually disabled individuals, the effects of heightened status during this period could well have great significance for their future lives. Obviously some level of academic achievement and independent living skills will still be vital for successful community integration, but the achievement of these skills may well be enhanced.

6.9.2 Cognitive Strategy Training

Power necessitates control over one's life. Intellectually disabled students need opportunities to practise taking risks without serious consequences, and to practise working through a problem to find a satisfactory solution. A form of cognitive strategy training used by one of the teachers in the sample provides such opportunities. As part of his regular program, he has devised a "What if..." activity. When planning excursions or responding to incidental school or classroom events, the students are constantly asked to explore possible consequences in certain circumstances. Thus, "What if ...you get lost on the excursion?...it rains on swimming carnival day?...you forget your lunch?... someone won't stop teasing you?" and so on are used repeatedly to enable the students to test reactions they may have in a safe environment and to explore alternatives. This would appear to be a useful strategy for the enhancement of life skills. Greater appreciation of the consequences of their actions and the development of more appropriate responses should lead to greater control, and therefore power, in their lives.

6.10 Conclusion

In response to the first question posed at the conclusion of Chapter 2 - *Do adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities, their parents and teachers hold expectations and aspirations for independent living that society could reasonably be expected to meet?* - this research supports overwhelmingly an affirmative answer. Adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities in this sample aspire to the same goals of functional independence and adult status as do most other young people approaching adulthood.
The fact that this might prove to be a matter of surprise and even inconvenience for many workers in the helping professions cannot be a basis for diminishing these normal expectations. Because they have the legal and moral rights to the fulfilment of such aspirations, it must be said that society has the responsibility of providing the means by which these aspirations may be met. Both the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Mentally Retarded Persons (1971) and more locally the New South Wales Ant-Discrimination Act (1977) reinforce these legal and moral rights.

The survey conducted on the services available in the South Coast Region for people with mild intellectual disabilities reveals that in many cases, the requisite services are available but not always accessible to their target clientele. Thus, a key problem has been identified in pursuing the answer to the second broad question in Chapter 2 - *If aspirations and expectations are raised, even slightly, does society currently offer the kind of employment, accommodation and lifestyle opportunities to make these manifest?* The target clients' lack of awareness of available services suggests that they have had little input into service planning and provision, thus such services can only ever be of limited value to the people for whom they have theoretically been designed. Including the client population in a meaningful way in the planning and provision procedures is an obvious and necessary step in facilitating the process by which people with intellectual disabilities assume their rights and responsibilities. Most importantly, the evidence of this study shows how unsafe it is to assume that people with mild intellectual disabilities simply cannot think for themselves about how they might spend their lives.

Perhaps the most crucial question of all - *Does it make a damaging difference to adolescents with mild intellectual disabilities to have realistic expectations that lie, or are persistently forced, below the conditions to which they aspire?* - prompts the most disturbing answer. The evidence gathered in this research suggests that there are extremely damaging consequences both at the individual and wider community levels.
The chronically low self-esteem exhibited by so many participants in this study, poor health and fitness standards, additional physical, social, emotional and environmental problems, limited employment prospects, the lack of support available from schools and regular teachers and low levels of recognition from other members of mainstream society, are evidence of the impact of mild intellectual impairment on people in a society that does not adequately address their needs. While extremely damaging at the individual level, the waste of the viable resource that people with mild intellectual disabilities could and often do represent in a community, is equally destructive.

Given reasonable evidence that individuals with mild intellectual disabilities are capable of obtaining some control over their own lives, we must ask whether the necessary conferred power is still being denied them.

It is tempting to come down on one side or the other as to whether an incremental approach or an wholistic approach would be more effective in improving the lot of intellectually disabled people. The evidence compiled in this study provides some basis for hope. It seems possible that both wholistic and incremental approaches to change and reform could be utilised simultaneously.

At the policy level, integration obviously has to be considered much more, and much more carefully. The level of integration, exemplified through the experiences of IM classes in this study reveals great inadequacies in its implementation. The lack of practical and administrative support at the school and regional levels reflects either a regrettable lack of concern or lack of understanding of the needs of intellectually disabled students and their teachers.

At the incremental level, a large number of small but important changes could be made. 1. Greater concentration in regular teacher education programs on strategies effective with disabled learners, including cognitive strategy training and strategies which
develop students' self-esteem could contribute significantly to more effective integration. Increasing the skills of regular teachers, while benefitting those students in regular classes with some learning difficulties, may also increase the willingness and ability of regular teachers to be involved in integration programs with IM students.

2. More appropriate screening procedures for teacher selection into special education classes based on some of the personal and organisational outcomes identified above could do much to promote the cause of the disabled student and his or her teacher.

3. Closer collaboration with a range of professionals would meet the diverse needs of this group more appropriately.

4. More effective dissemination of the information regarding post school options for this group should result in the more effective use of the services currently available for them.

5. Further investigation of the curriculum offered to these students in collaboration with parents may result in a more effective and more consistent approach to their education. While an emphasis on living skills in the curriculum is understandable, more effective strategies for the teaching of basic skills to intellectually disabled students must be sought constantly. A sound foundation in written and spoken communication and in computation skills is still a requirement for most jobs as well as for domestic and financial management. Students' lack of proficiency in basic skills is extremely debilitating of itself and complicates attempts to provide services.

6. Consideration should be given to providing a range of secondary options for the students. Their needs must not be subordinated to a single model of service for administrative convenience. Secondary education must become more relevant and
rewarding for this group of students. A variety of programs and a range of placements may be necessary to meet their needs.

7. Work experience should be broadened for intellectually disabled students. More varied options should be explored. The more knowledge a student has of work and career opportunities, the more motivated the student will be to enter the world of work. While there remains a need for advocacy, lobbying for positions by advocates could result in the limitations of the worker being emphasised, rather than the skills.

The attainment of power, long overdue, is within the reach of people with intellectual disabilities. All possible steps to facilitate this process should be taken.
Appendices
Appendix I  Interview Schedule

The following are examples only of questions asked of the students in each of the main areas of enquiry. The actual language used depended on the interviewee and subsequent questions depended greatly on respondents' answers to the focus questions. When there were differences between expected and anticipated levels of achievement, the reasons for these differences were explored. Questions were also asked in a number of different ways throughout the interviews to provide a reliability check.

In all cases, the questions were preceded by discussion centring on the period of life to which reference was being made. Questions to parents and teachers were necessarily changed so that they applied to their child or student, rather than to themselves.

Focal Areas and Sample Questions

1. Residential Circumstances
   a. Where will you live when you are grown up?
   b. Where would you like to live?
   c. Who will you live with?
   d. Who would you like to live with?

2. Family Status
   a. Will you get married?
   b. Would you like to get married?
   c. Will you have children?
   d. Would you like to have children?
3. **Financial Management**
   a. Will you look after all the money you'll need by yourself?
   b. Would you like to look after the money by yourself?

4. **Use of Public Transport**
   a. Will you travel on trains and buses by yourself? Where to?
   b. Where would you like to be able to go?

5. **Independent Living Skills**
   a. Will you cook, wash up, iron, clean, go shopping and do all those things when you are grown up?
   b. Would you like to do all those things?

6. **Occupational Choice**
   a. What job will you have when you are grown up?
   b. What job would you like to have?

7. **Leisure Activities**
   a. What hobbies will you have when you are grown up?
   b. What hobbies would you like to have?
   c. Where will you go for holidays when you are grown up?
   d. Where would you like to go?
   e. Will you join any clubs when you are grown up?
   f. Would you like to join any clubs?
   g. Will you play sport when you are grown up?
   h. Would you like to play sport when you are grown up?

8. **Problem Solving/Support Network**
   a. What will you do if you have some sort of problem when you are grown up?
b. What would you like to be able to do if you had a problem?

c. Who will help you with your problems?

d. Who would you like to help you with your problems?

e. What sort of people will your friends be when you are grown up?

f. What sort of people would you like to be your friends when you are grown up?

9. Improvement of Life Chances

a. What could make your life better when you are grown up?
Ms D Konza  
University of Wollongong  
P O Box 1144  
WOLLONGONG NSW 2500

Dear Ms Konza,

I refer to your request to conduct research in Departmental schools involving perceived and actual prospects for the independent functioning of mildly intellectually impaired adolescents in the Illawarra Region.

Approval has been given by the Director-General of Education, Dr F. G. Sharpe, for you to approach Principals of the nominated schools.

In conducting research, you should be aware of the following requirements:

- the Principal must approve how the study is to be carried out, and approve each phase before it is undertaken;
- the Principal must approve the methods of gathering information in the school;
- the Principal has the right to withdraw the school from the study at any time;
- teachers have the right to withdraw from the study at any time;
- the privacy of the school and the students is to be protected.

You are reminded that the participation of teachers and students must be voluntary and must be at the school's convenience.

When your study is completed, you are asked to provide this Department with a report of your findings. Please forward your report to the Department marked "Attention: Director, Management Information Services".

Yours sincerely,

B Henry  
Director,  
Management Information Services.

1 MAY 1989
Dear Sir,

I am writing to request your approval for a research project I would like to carry out involving some of the IM students at your school, their parents and class teacher. At present I am on L.W.O.P. from the Department of Education and lecturing in Special Education at The University of Wollongong. From 1978 to 1987 I taught students with disabilities, generally those with visual and hearing impairment but also a number of students with multiple disabilities, including a range of intellectual impairments. I have received funding from The University of Wollongong to carry out this piece of research and it has received clearance from the Ethics Committee, dependent upon the approval of the Department of Education, individual principals, teachers, parents and students.

Previous contact with IM students, their teachers and parents has highlighted a widespread concern for their employment prospects and the lack of appropriate community services and resources to support these students as they become adults.

The research project aims at identifying the aspirations and expectations of the students as to their future level of independent community living and the aspirations and expectations their parents and teachers have for them. This information will be gained through interviews with the students, their parents and teachers and the data will then be compared with the resources available in the community, in an attempt to determine whether their needs will be met. It is likely that some empirical evidence will arise that supports current demands for improved facilities and resources for this disadvantaged group.

If valuable information can be gathered and presented appropriately, the community may be able to meet the needs of IM students more appropriately. Feedback to the Department of Education and participating schools is guaranteed. You may, of course, exercise your right to withdraw from the study at any time.

I will contact you soon to check whether you and the class teacher(s) are willing to participate. I will then contact parents for their approval. I would be very happy to discuss the research further with you if more details are required.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely,

Deslea Konza,
Lecturer, School of Learning Studies.
Dear ..., 

I am a lecturer at The University of Wollongong in the Faculty of Education and am investigating the future plans of students in the IM class. I am also interested in what plans you have for .......... and what community services you feel are necessary to help .......... after leaving school. In doing this, I hope to understand more about what your child needs, and in what ways the community could provide more support for your child.

In order to find out this information, I would like to talk to you and your child. This could take place at school or at your home, whichever you prefer. All information will be kept anonymous and confidential.

If you are willing to take part in this study, please sign the attached form to give permission for your child to participate. I will contact you by phone to arrange an interview time. The form should be returned to the class teacher.

Thank you very much.

Yours sincerely,

Deslea Konza
Lecturer, School of Learning Studies
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